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SOCIAL, HUMANITARIAN AND HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS:
REPORTS OF SUBSIDIARY BODIES, CONFERENCES AND
RELATED QUESTIONS: ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

Report of the Board of Trustees of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women on its fifteenth session

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I. MATTERS BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

1. At its fifteenth session, the Board of Trustees of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) reviewed the work accomplished by the Institute during the first term of the biennium 1994-1995, and gave special attention to the preparation of INSTRAW's participation at the Fourth World Conference on Women.

2. The attention of the Economic and Social Council is drawn to the Board's conclusions concerning the overall programme of action for INSTRAW (Part II) and concerning operational and budgetary issues (Part VIII).

II. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WORK PROGRAMME FOR 1994: PROGRESS REPORT ON THE INSTITUTE WITH SPECIAL ATTENTION TO ACTIVITIES RELATED TO THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN

3. In considering this agenda item, the Acting Director explained that documents INSTRAW/BT/1995/R.2 and INSTRAW/BT/1995/INF/2/Add.1 reflected the work programme of INSTRAW which was already in progress when she joined the Institute. She considered it appropriate that each staff member directly in charge of corresponding programme elements should present to the Board the work accomplished during the period. In addressing the first part of the document the Acting Director summarized INSTRAW's participation in the regional preparatory conferences for the Fourth World Conference for Women. In this regard, it was noted that substantive contributions were presented and INSTRAW publications and materials were distributed.

1. Participation at the regional preparatory process

4. The first regional preparatory conference (second Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Women in Development, 7 June 1994) was convened by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). The INSTRAW staff member who attended the meeting briefly described the themes presented that had direct relevance to the work of INSTRAW. The need for statistical data that reflected the migration of women and the development of statistical methods for measuring and valuing unpaid work were among the important issues for which INSTRAW could provide insights due to the work carried out on those topics. Possibilities for collaboration with ESCAP were being explored.

5. The Acting Director then presented INSTRAW's participation in the second regional preparatory conference (Sixth Regional Preparatory Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of the Latin American and Caribbean Region, 20-25 September 1994), held by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). She expressed the view that one of the major issues at that Conference was the invisibility of women's contribution to national economies and the non-inclusion of the informal sector, in which women have significant participation, in the System of National Accounts. INSTRAW's work could help to define indicators that would determine women's needs and ways of distributing resources.

6. The third regional preparatory conference (High-level Regional Preparatory Meeting of the Economic Commission for Europe, 17-21 October 1994) was convened by the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE). The Acting Director noted the four major points highlighted: (a) the situation of aging populations; (b) the erosion of social networks; (c) the situation of women in transitional economies and how the social, economic and political changes are affecting them; and (d) the special situation of widows. During that conference, INSTRAW focal points held an informal meeting at which it was decided that four focal points (Canada, Cuba, Italy and Sri Lanka) would be invited to attend the 1995 meeting of the INSTRAW Board of Trustees as observers. For varying reasons, only the focal point from Cuba was able to attend.

7. The fourth regional preparatory conference (Arab Regional Preparatory Meeting, 9-10 November 1994) in the region of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) was attended by INSTRAW's focal point in Italy. The Director informed the Board that, initially, the Institute had intended to organize, in collaboration with ESCWA, a subregional seminar on assessment of the research and training needs of Arab women in the ESCWA and ECA regions, prior to the regional preparatory conference. However, owing to logistical problems, it was decided by both organizations to postpone the seminar to a later stage.

8. The fifth regional preparatory meeting (Fifth African Regional Conference on Women, 16-23 November 1994), in the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) region was attended by the Acting Director and one staff member who informed the Board of the main elements of the Conference and INSTRAW's contributions to this event. She noted that there was a serious need to translate INSTRAW publications into other languages of the region. Regarding the African Platform for Action, emphasis was placed on education for women, including environmental education and gender development. These issues were stated in various resolutions. The non-governmental organization's Plan of Action emphasized the need to strengthen non-governmental organizations and to sustain closer partnership with Governments and development agencies. The Plan also highlighted the need for a freer press that could contribute to women's education. The forum decided that the Plan of Action should include girls and young women in its consideration, and that young men should also be an active part of the gender and social and economic discussions.

9. The representatives of ECLAC and ECA reiterated the importance of maintaining collaboration and interaction between INSTRAW and the regional commissions. In this connection the representative of ECA proposed to formalize a process of designing joint programmes between INSTRAW and each regional commission. She pointed out that INSTRAW's research was related to the African Platform for Action and could be transferred into concrete actions and strategies for the advancement of women. The representative of ECLAC pointed out that, although cooperation between INSTRAW and the regional commission had no formalized system, a number of successful joint ventures had been undertaken in the past.

10. The Acting Director welcomed the interventions by the representatives of the two regional commissions and highlighted the need for future cooperation and implementation of various regional plans and platforms for action. She pointed

out that financial considerations for the joint programming and priorities should be established for each region.

11. The Acting Director informed the Board on INSTRAW's participation in various United Nations ad hoc inter-agency meetings in view of establishing better coordination among agencies.

2. Presentation of progress report

Preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women

12. The Acting Director informed the meeting that INSTRAW was currently preparing two special activities for the Conference, one addressing aspects of natural resources, and the other, on empowerment of women. For the non-governmental organization Forum, INSTRAW was currently organizing four panels on the following subjects: (a) communications for women in development: strategies for a global reach; (b) measurement and valuation of unpaid work using time-use data; (c) women, water and environmental sanitation; and (d) economic and political empowerment of women. The staff members responsible for the organization of each panel gave a brief description of its focus and objective.

13. The Acting Director introduced the report contained in document INSTRAW/BT/1995/R.2 on the implementation of the research and training programmes and requested respective staff members to provide in-depth explanations of the work accomplished.

Political and economic empowerment

14. Under the subprogramme on empowerment of women, the outputs of the project on gender impact analysis of credit projects were described. It was also explained that while an additional booklet for the Gender Training Portfolio on women's human rights had been proposed, it was decided not to produce the booklet. One of the reasons given for the decision was the inability to find a unique treatment of the subject since so many other institutions and agencies, both within and outside the United Nations system, were currently publishing documents on it. In that context, the representative of the International Training Centre of the ILO informed the Board that an information kit and package on "Women and workers' rights" had been prepared by their Centre in cooperation with the ILO, which contained a pocket guide on all resolutions and conventions related to women's rights, including posters and video. In 1994, a pocket guide on women and human rights was also produced by the Centre in cooperation with the United Nations Centre for Human Rights.

15. The final manuscript of a booklet entitled "Gender concepts in development planning", containing some reflections on the word-concept of "gender" and its research, with an approach that examines the roles of women and men in society, was briefly presented and distributed to the Board. Publication is scheduled for September 1995. A Board member referred to the debate surrounding the term "equality" that had transpired at the Second Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Women in Development, held in Jakarta in June 1994. He informed the Board

that owing to "varying opinions on how to define the status and ultimate end of equality", the Indonesian delegation had proposed to translate the term into "harmonious gender partnership for mutual benefit for women and men". It was stressed by the Board, however, that since the term "equality" was one of the three major themes of the Fourth World Conference on Women, INSTRAW should also maintain the word "equality".

16. A Board member reiterated the need for INSTRAW to carry out activities on that topic, also in the Arab States and the Middle East.

Women, statistics and indicators

17. The main outputs and ongoing activities under the subprogramme on statistics and indicators on gender issues were also presented.

18. The continuing collaboration with the Statistical Division of the United Nations Secretariat, other United Nations agencies and the regional commissions was mentioned. It was also emphasized that INSTRAW would be acknowledged as one of the major sponsors of the second edition of the World's Women which was currently being prepared in time for the Fourth World Conference on Women.

19. It was brought to the attention of the Board that several requests from countries in the European region had been received to organize subregional workshops on gender statistics. The idea was supported by the Board members who emphasized the importance of convening such a group for countries with economies in transition, particularly for those that belonged to the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

20. It was reported that pertinent publications would be presented to the Fourth World Conference on Women entitled as follows: "The migration of women: methodological issues in the measurement and analysis of internal and international migration"; "Measurement and valuation of the unpaid contribution: accounting through time and output"; "Credit for women: why is it important?"; "Analysis of the impact of credit projects on women micro-entrepreneurs".

Women and environment

21. Under the subprogramme on women, environment and sustainable development, it was reported to the Board that the substantive outputs for the period under review were completed successfully.

22. Three national training seminars on women, water supply and sanitation were conducted: 1/ in Namibia, with an attendance of 34 participants; in Guyana, with an attendance of 40 participants; and in Ecuador, with an attendance of 48 participants. The seminars were completed successfully. The training package on women, water supply and sanitation was translated into Spanish, in-house. The national focal point in Ecuador later organized five follow-up training seminars in that country, with 154 participants.

23. The modular training package, Women, Environmental Management and Sustainable Development, prepared by INSTRAW between 1994 and 1995 in cooperation with the International Training Centre of the ILO, was presented to the Board by the staff member in charge and the representative of the ILO. It was recommended that a training seminar should be organized in 1995 in countries with economies in transition to present the new training package (see also paras. 151-152).

24. The system of reporting and the cooperation between INSTRAW and the United Nations system in the area of women, water, renewable energy and sustainable development, was brought to the attention of the Board. INSTRAW's unique mandate in this area emphasized the need to strengthen further activities of coordination within the United Nations system regarding these topics. The Board ratified that INSTRAW should report to the Second Committee of the General Assembly on these items.

25. The need to update the training packages on: "Women, water supply and sanitation", and on "Women and renewable sources of energy", was brought to the attention of the Board, which recommended that funds for that purpose should be allocated.

26. The President of the Board, and some of its members, requested clarification on the evaluation of various INSTRAW training seminars. It was pointed out that three types of evaluations were carried out: prior, during and after activities. However, the need for follow-up and systematic evaluation of INSTRAW training seminars should become a regular component of all subprogrammes, for which appropriate budgetary allocations should be provided.

27. The need to allocate funds for follow-up activities upon completion of training seminars was also raised by the Board members.

Communications for women in development

28. The outputs of the special project "Development of Communications Materials for Women in Development", funded by the Government of Italy, including programmes in Argentina, Colombia and the Dominican Republic, were reported to the Board. The President of the Board sought clarification on the specific outputs of this project, particularly on the comparative results or parallel findings emerging from the case studies that were conducted in those three countries. The staff member responsible for the projects stated that in relation to the portrayal of women in the media, all countries had some alternative media seeking to portray women in a fairer manner. However, there was a gap between the way mass media portrayed women in general, and women's concerns and needs as members of any given society.

29. The Acting Director informed the Board that the activities of the Information, Communication and Documentation Unit were temporarily being performed by staff members who actually belonged to the Research and Training Unit, in view of the fact that the key posts of the former unit were currently vacant. A staff member was requested to describe the activities being carried out in that unit, particularly those that pertained to the preparation of inputs to the Fourth World Conference on Women. The staff member mentioned a list of

publications, booklets, flyers and brochures that had been prepared or were currently under preparation.

30. In addition, the staff member mentioned the preparation of the forthcoming INSTRAW News. The Board members noted the change of the subscription price for INSTRAW News and supported the decision made by the Acting Director to allocate a price to some publications and to raise the subscriptions' price to cover production and the mailing costs. The Board recommended that additional marketing options be established to further promote and disseminate INSTRAW's work and publications.

31. The staff member in charge of publishing commented briefly on the performance of the printing shop during the period, and described the present conditions of the equipment and facilities. She mentioned that despite the existing limited capacity and condition of the printing shop, a total number of approximately 1 million pages had been printed and approximately 140,000 pages were photocopied. She also informed on the dissemination of the publications and stated that the Institute was grateful to the regional commissions for their assistance in distributing INSTRAW News in their respective regions, particularly ECA, ESCAP and ESCWA. The Board members recommended that an updated list of INSTRAW's publications and other materials should be produced and regularly sent to focal points as well as to research centres and interested non-governmental organizations.

32. The Board members commended INSTRAW's staff for having provided the services required from the Unit despite the conditions described, and for having produced documents of good quality. They also reiterated that financial resources were indeed necessary to upgrade the facilities and condition of the Unit.

33. The Board recommended that INSTRAW's public information materials and substantive reports should be translated into different languages and disseminated world wide. A Board member expressed the need to make INSTRAW's programmes more visible through intensive public information campaigns, particularly using television and videos. The Acting Director explained that certain outputs had not been achieved owing to the structural and internal problems of the Information, Communication and Documentation Unit.

Cooperation with the regional commissions and with the United Nations system

34. The representatives of ECLAC and ECA expressed their concern that the progress report did not contain any specific mention of cooperation between INSTRAW and the regional commissions. They reiterated the importance of maintaining, expanding and strengthening such collaboration and interaction.

35. The representative of ECLAC stated that at present, INSTRAW was experiencing a turning point, therefore its cooperation with the regional commissions required some analysis so that INSTRAW could significantly contribute to the regional work that was taking place; by the same token, the regional commissions could provide support to INSTRAW's activities, based on their knowledge of their specific regional conditions, and the regional institutions dealing with the relevant subjects. She mentioned that at present,

taking advantage of the momentum, the Board might wish to recommend substantive aspects in which the regional commissions and INSTRAW could cooperate to project a better vision of its future after the Conference, which would be a very important departing point.

36. The representative of ECA stated that it had found INSTRAW research and training activities very relevant to the work ECA was carrying out at the regional level. She stated that sometimes it was not clear whether the formal collaboration between ECA and INSTRAW was on an ad hoc basis or was a more formal relationship. She proposed to elaborate a formal process of consultations in terms of drawing up programmes for each biennium, so that when INSTRAW selected the priority areas of concentration by region, the choice could be made by direct consultations between the region and INSTRAW itself. She observed that the programme of action for 1996-1997 for the African region was drawn from the African Platform for Action. Therefore, INSTRAW could reflect on these recommendations for research projects, particularly by converting the results of the research into strategies for plans of action.

37. The Acting Director welcomed the interventions by the representatives of the two regional commissions and highlighted the need for clear guidelines for future cooperation and implementation of various recommendations contained in the regional plans of action. She pointed out that INSTRAW's priorities for each region should be established in a comprehensive and coordinated form, with adequate consideration given to the financial requirements. She stated that the progress report did not contain complete considerations on cooperation schemes with the regional commissions owing to (a) the incertitude that had affected the activities of the Institute, (b) the lack of progress in the deliberations about institutional arrangements at the thirty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, as well as (c) the lack of time in the preparation of the progress report.

38. Some Board members reiterated their concern that no information or mechanisms for coordination and development of the Institute's programmes with the regional commissions were contained in the report. In order to avoid duplications of work, as well as for financial and political reasons, the Board recommended the need for strengthening coordination between INSTRAW, the regional commissions, the United Nations system, academic institutions and agencies, etc.

39. The Acting Director concurred with the recommendations made by the Board on the need to prepare guidelines and institutional mechanisms for INSTRAW's future work with the United Nations system and other institutions.

40. A Board member pointed out that INSTRAW should not limit its cooperation to other United Nations agencies, but should also establish contacts and benefit from the research and training done by academic and research institutions. She pointed out that INSTRAW should continue conducting its research and training activities world wide, as well as carry out its interregional cooperation.

41. The analysis of the cooperation between INSTRAW, the regional commissions and the United Nations system provided ground for the Acting Director to bring to the attention of the Board INSTRAW's reporting system to the Economic and

Social Council and the General Assembly, particularly on INSTRAW's major chapters: women and environment, water, sanitation, waste management, natural resources, renewable energy, areas in which INSTRAW had a unique mandate; or those pertaining to the realm of political and economic empowerment, statistics and indicators, migration and resettlements (HABITAT), that were part of the agenda of the Second Committee.

42. The Board recommended that INSTRAW report to the Second Committee of the General Assembly on those items and to the Third Committee on the corresponding ones and that INSTRAW should continue its coordination activities within those subprogramme areas.

43. It was reiterated by the Board that the evaluation and follow-up of INSTRAW's work in various areas should become a regular component of the programmes. To this effect, the President informed the Board of the intention of the Government of the Netherlands to commission an external assessment or evaluation of INSTRAW's current state of affairs.

44. The Board recommended that the general guidelines for the next work programme should be defined. Furthermore, the Board also recommended that future Board meetings should be organized prior to the beginning of the following biennium and in advance of the Council's regular session, in order to have the report adopted by the General Assembly.

45. In conclusion, the Board members congratulated the Acting Director and highly commended the staff members for demonstrating their commitment to the Institute's work given the special situation of the Institute during the period under review. They particularly praised the way the report was presented by the Acting Director and the opportunity she had given the staff members to inform on the implementation of their corresponding programmes. It was decided that this innovative and substantive mode of reporting should be maintained as a permanent way of presenting the progress report in future Board sessions.

3. Conclusions

46. The Board stressed that INSTRAW should retain its original mandate and a distinct capacity to carry out research and training for the advancement of women as stipulated in General Assembly resolution 3520 (XXX) of 15 December 1975.

47. The Board emphasized that systematic evaluation, monitoring and follow-up of the work of INSTRAW would be regularly implemented following the guidelines and procedures enunciated by the Strategic Planning Committee.

48. The Board decided that the Strategic Planning Committee would convene immediately after the Fourth World Conference on Women, which was scheduled to take place on 4-15 September in Beijing.

49. The Board decided that INSTRAW should continue its work and establish priorities in areas where the Institute had already acquired valuable research and training expertise. These included: empowerment of women as an overall

concept; mass media; statistics and indicators on gender issues; natural resources and sustainable development: water, waste management and sanitation; renewable energy; and issues related to different groups of female population such as the ageing, displaced; refugees and migrants.

50. The Board decided that INSTRAW should introduce the following in its new programme, among other subjects:

(a) Activities geared at implementing the recommendations emanating from the Fourth World Conference on Women, specially those related to research and training needs for the advancement of women;

(b) Expansion of the inventory of research and training programmes carried out for women, within and outside the United Nations system;

(c) Greater interaction and collaboration between donors, agencies and relevant institutions in the field of research and training;

(d) Effective coordination with United Nations agencies to avoid duplication and enhance INSTRAW's research and training comparative advantages on women's issues;

(e) Networking and coordinating mechanisms for future collaboration and follow-up programmes between agencies.

51. The Board recommended that INSTRAW's report should also be considered under the relevant items of the Second Committee, in order to improve the coordination and synergy of its programmes with other economic and social issues.

52. After careful examination, the Board approved INSTRAW's preparatory activities related to the Fourth World Conference on Women, and decided to request the Secretary-General of the Conference to include, among the official documentation to be disseminated at the Conference, background information on INSTRAW portraying its past, present and new priorities.

53. The Board endorsed INSTRAW's delegation to the Conference, composed of the President of the Board, the Acting Director and at least three staff members, subject to relevant directives. The Board also endorsed on the same basis INSTRAW's participation in the non-governmental organizations' Forum on Women, with two staff members for each of the four panels that INSTRAW will be conducting at the Forum. The joint participation of INSTRAW and the Department for Development Support and Management Services in some of the activities was also endorsed, as well as in relation to the logistical arrangements to ensure appropriate participation. In addition, qualified interns might also form part of the delegation at their own initiative and expense.

54. The Board also decided that close attention should be paid to critical areas of concern as defined in the Platform for Action to be adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women, as well as the regional plans/platforms for action.

55. As one of the activities for implementing such objectives, the Board endorsed the proposal that INSTRAW should convene an international meeting on research and training on gender issues in the first half of 1996.

56. The Board welcomed the strengthening relations and cooperation between INSTRAW and the International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization aimed at expanding and regularizing joint training programmes. In this context, the Board noted with appreciation the invitation of the International Training Centre of the ILO to host international meetings on research and training on gender related issues, the preparations for which would be undertaken jointly by INSTRAW and the Centre.

57. The Board considered that linkages and collaboration between INSTRAW and the regional commissions should be strengthened and enhanced. The Board recommended that INSTRAW expand its training programmes to include more regions in its current programmes and enhance interregional activities on gender-related issues.

58. The Board advised the Acting Director to undertake preparatory activities to facilitate INSTRAW's substantive participation at the forthcoming United Nations international conferences and events, including the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) in 1996, and the International Year of the Elderly Persons in 1999.

59. The Board reiterated that INSTRAW should continue and improve the scope of its cooperation with other United Nations agencies, such as the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); the United Nations Institute for Social Development (UNRISD); the United Nations University (UNU); and others.

60. The Board stressed the importance of developing effective communication mechanisms between the focal points and INSTRAW and encouraged the Institute to develop a more balanced system of establishing focal points as well as correspondents, whenever required, in all regions, in accordance with its Statute. Modalities would be studied to allow flexibility and active participation of focal points for greater effectiveness at regional and interregional interaction.

61. The Board welcomed the new form of reporting introduced by the Acting Director and encouraged her to adopt it as a regular procedure for the forthcoming sessions.

III. THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN

A. Draft Platform for Action

62. When considering this agenda item, the Board had before it documents INSTRAW/BT/1995/R.4, INSTRAW/BT/1995/R.4/Add.1, INSTRAW/BT/1995/R.4/Add.2, INSTRAW/BT/1995/R.4/Add.3; a copy of the draft Platform for Action; and United Nations press releases WOM/833 and 834 of 6 and 10 April 1995.

63. A Board member recalled that at the last session of the Board, note was taken of the five regional conferences to be held in 1994, the process to follow towards the Fourth World Conference on Women and the preparation of the Platform for Action. She also referred to the fact that each regional conference had adopted a regional plan or platform for action, on the basis of which, the secretariat of the Fourth World Conference on Women had prepared the draft Platform for Action to be adopted at the Conference and which was discussed at the recently concluded thirty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

64. Regarding the thirty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, which she had attended as a member of the delegation of her country, and upon the request of the President, the same Board member, gave the Board a thorough background of the discussions that had taken place on the draft Platform for Action. She pointed out that the draft Platform had been adopted with a considerable number of paragraphs (approximately 60 per cent) kept in brackets, implying that no consensus was reached on those issues. In particular, she brought to the attention of the Board, the paragraphs and discussions relevant to INSTRAW and UNIFEM under the chapter on institutional arrangements, and the paragraphs pertaining to the financial arrangements proposed in the draft Platform for Action.

65. The Acting Director was requested to introduce document INSTRAW/BT/1995/R.4, which provides an overview of the various research and training needs of issues related to women and a proposal for convening an international conference on research and training on gender issues. The Acting Director emphasized that the proposal was at its very preliminary stage, the details of which would be further defined. The Board endorsed the proposal, recognizing that paragraph 231 of the draft Platform for Action already stipulated that "INSTRAW should develop networks of research institutions and serve as a focal point for gender training in the United Nations system as a whole within its field of competence".

66. The representative of ECA suggested that the initiative should be presented as a concrete proposal to the Fourth World Conference on Women. This proposal was endorsed by the Board.

67. Taking into account the number of agencies, institutions and universities that deal with research and training on women and gender issues, as well as the critical time factor, the following recommendations were also forwarded:

(a) To organize an international conference limited to the agencies that dealt with research and training on women's issues in order to properly coordinate the activities and programme priorities. The urgency of convening such a conference was emphasized. It was considered that it should not be postponed, and preferably it should be conducted in the first half of 1996;

(b) To organize seminars and workshops for other research institutions, universities and individual researchers and experts to discuss specific research and training projects or activities on women or gender issues world wide.

68. Current debates surrounding the concept of gender were also raised particularly in view of the different meanings of "gender" as a word and a term when translated into different languages. A Board member mentioned that the issue was debated at the recent session of the Commission on the Status of Women. The Commission had decided to organize a "contact group" that would meet from 15 May to 15 June 1995 to propose a list of definition of terms, terminology and possible glossary on gender and other emerging words that referred to the social and economic sectors. An INSTRAW staff member was requested to make a brief description of the research that the Institute had carried out in this area.

69. Regarding the emerging definitions of concepts and terms dealing with the advancement of women in the social, economic, political and cultural sectors, the Acting Director stated that INSTRAW would prepare a glossary of related emerging gender terms.

70. The Board also suggested that INSTRAW should explore the possibility of co-sponsoring the proposed conferences and meetings with other institutions or agencies. It was also recommended that if possible INSTRAW could organize such conferences on a more regular basis, annually or every two years.

B. Follow-up action

71. The Acting Director explained that the purpose of agenda item 8 (a) was to provide the Board with elements that could facilitate identification of the main priorities for INSTRAW's work programme, based on substantive General Assembly resolutions and the outcomes of main United Nations conventions and conferences. Complementary information on priorities defined in the regional plans and platforms for action were also reflected in document INSTRAW/BT/1995/R.5.

72. She emphasized that the work of INSTRAW for the next biennium should take into account the salient elements and outputs that had emanated from the recent United Nations international conferences and major conventions, with special attention to the concrete comments provided by the Board in its deliberations.

73. The President of the Board remarked that INSTRAW should concentrate on women and women's problems but not in isolation from mainstream developmental problems. The Institute should identify its priorities and provide inputs on various aspects of policy-making affecting women. She stressed that setting priorities was urgent, owing to the fact that an increasing number of women lived in critical conditions. She indicated that Agenda 21 was a very useful document although it concentrated on environment, but INSTRAW had developed strength and expertise in certain areas, such as water and sanitation, and should continue to work in those areas. She also recognized INSTRAW's strength on gender statistics and further emphasized that the Institute should reinforce work on those issues in which it had a unique role, such as the work on ageing women. She stated that INSTRAW should also contribute to the definition of concepts and reiterated that duplication should be avoided. Contacts with relevant agencies and institutions should be reinforced in order to identify research and training needs. The President suggested that INSTRAW should reinforce collaboration with research institutions such as UNRISD.

74. In continuing the deliberations, a Board member mentioned that the Vienna Declaration addressed issues that were directly relevant to INSTRAW's work, and suggested that INSTRAW should also concentrate its efforts and resources on women and family issues. A Board member said that INSTRAW needed to limit its work programme and give priority to concrete women's issues. Another Board member added that while it was true that INSTRAW's scope of work should be delimited and viable, there were issues, such as water, in which women were very much involved and in which INSTRAW had played a crucial role. She pointed out that INSTRAW had already extensive knowledge and experience on this issue which had to be exploited, given the importance of water scarcity envisaged for the future.

75. Another Board member referred to the importance of providing equal attention and resources to the issue of empowerment of women, of which she acknowledged, environment was also a source. She also inquired on the extent of collaboration and consultations between INSTRAW and other United Nations agencies such as the Statistical Division of the United Nations Secretariat in the area of gender statistics.

76. The representative of the Government of the host country informed the Board that on 20 April, the Commission for Social Development had approved a resolution on the celebration of 1999 as the International Year of Elderly Persons. In this resolution, INSTRAW was invited to continue its research work on ageing women in accordance with the recommendations to be adopted in Beijing. She commented that INSTRAW's publication on elderly women was welcomed and positively received in the Vienna Forum on Women in October 1994. She also added, that the term "elderly women" should be substituted for "older women". The President of the Board also acknowledged the popularity of INSTRAW's publication on elderly women and expressed that INSTRAW should continue to prepare similar materials.

77. The representative of ECLAC indicated that the document prepared for this agenda item could facilitate the preparation of a mid-term working plan. However, she cautioned that INSTRAW should coordinate its work with the regional commissions and other agencies in order to avoid duplication and to determine specific subregional priorities. As some of the areas identified in the regional plans were common, the possibility for more interregional activities should be explored. The Acting Director concurred in these observations and reiterated the importance of converting areas of common interest into collaborative accords between agencies. The role of INSTRAW to act as a catalyst between Governments, institutions, research entities and non-governmental organizations was crucial.

78. The representative of UNICEF expressed its satisfaction with the positive collaboration in the past decade between INSTRAW and UNICEF in the area of women, water supply and sanitation, and confirmed UNICEF's commitment to co-sponsoring with INSTRAW the workshop "Women, Water Supply and Sanitation" to be presented in Beijing.

79. A Board member commented on the unbalanced distribution of the Institute's work in different regions and mentioned the lack of activities conducted in Arab countries. In this connection, the Acting Director stated that until now, in

many cases, INSTRAW had responded to specific requests rather than taking initiatives based on a research strategy, in many cases because of the limited financial resources. She reiterated that it was obviously easier and less expensive to conduct pilot and other studies in the host country than in Arab ones, where language was a real impediment, as INSTRAW's working languages were English, French and Spanish, although Arabic, Chinese and Russian were also official languages of the United Nations. She pointed out the need for careful consideration and finding adequate financial solutions in all cases.

80. The President of the Board recommended that the Institute should update public information reports on its activities annually or biennially. She also acknowledged that financial constraints set limitations to INSTRAW's capacity to fully carry out its mandate. However, she indicated that there was a need to keep a systematic work guideline rather than to respond to specific demands. INSTRAW should, on the one hand, develop a clear vision of priorities for the coming years, and on the other hand be flexible enough to react to new possibilities of research and training. To this end, a research and training committee of knowledgeable persons in the field of women's studies should be set up to advise the Institute.

81. The representative of the International Training Centre of the ILO referred to the proposed international conference which was presented in document INSTRAW/BT/1995/R.4. In this connection, she suggested that INSTRAW and the Centre coordinate the organization of the conference and mentioned that the Centre could host that activity. In preparation for it, INSTRAW could make an inventory of research and training activities within the United Nations system. A definition of networking and possible future collaboration between agencies and a plan of action could be drawn. She also suggested that donors should be invited to the conference to improve interaction between donors and INSTRAW. This suggestion and offer was welcomed by the Board.

82. One Board member reiterated that the proposition of holding this conference should be presented as a concrete proposal at the Fourth World Conference on Women.

IV. CONTRIBUTION OF INSTRAW TO THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED NATIONS

83. The Acting Director introduced document INSTRAW/BT/1995/INF/1, "INSTRAW and the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations: INSTRAW's contribution". She referred to the INSTRAW/UNIFEM brochure, "Women and the United Nations 1945-1995". At the Acting Director's request, the public information assistant provided a brief description of the programme. She mentioned that the Institute was preparing activities at different levels, of which the above-mentioned leaflet was an example at the international level. At the national level, she explained that INSTRAW was part of an inter-agency committee of United Nations organizations to coordinate activities for the fiftieth anniversary, to take place in the Dominican Republic. Those activities would include holding an educational exhibit in connection with the "global teach-in" about the United Nations, the organization of concerts, and the possible issuance of a commemorative postage stamp.

84. The Acting Director said that the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations provided a very good opportunity for reflection on its future role, with due consideration for the principles stated in its Charter. With that aim, the Institute was organizing a series of colloquia on topics such as the impact of new technologies (as those applicable in the agricultural sector, water, waste management, textiles, communications, biotechnology) on women's life; new structures on trade; national and international credit systems; ethical questions through mass media; emerging social changes, such as new patterns of migration, resettlements, refugees, and increasing unemployment.

V. REVIEW OF THE IMPLICATIONS OF RECENT INTERGOVERNMENTAL DECISIONS RELATED TO INSTRAW AND THE PROPOSED STRONGER INTERACTION WITH CEDAW, THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN, THE DIVISION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN, UNIFEM AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS; PLANS OF INTERACTION OF INSTRAW AND UNIFEM AFTER 1995

85. The Board had before it document INSTRAW/BT/1995/R.3 which was introduced by the Acting Director. She pointed out that the item was envisaged by the fourteenth session of the Board in April 1994, and prepared prior to the discussions undertaken at the thirty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women. She stated that the difficulty in discussing the item lay in the fact that the state of the negotiations in the Commission had not reached a consensus on the draft Platform for Action and had not addressed the proposed "stronger interaction". However, a Board member suggested that despite the limitations, matters related to the future role of INSTRAW must be discussed under this item.

86. The representative of UNIFEM informed the Board that the new Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) supported and promoted a new approach incorporating a gender perspective within the concept of sustainable human development. She referred to the fact that there had been an earlier mention of the difficult situation that UNIFEM was undergoing and explained that the reasons were multiple, including inadequate resources in face of increasing demands, inappropriate systems, and some mismanagement. The crisis had manifested itself in an over-commitment of resources for 1995 and 1996. She expressed the wish of open future possibilities for cooperation. She also referred to an INSTRAW/UNIFEM collaboration, the joint publication Women at the United Nations 1945-1995 prepared on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

87. The representative of the host country brought to the attention of the Board the opinion of the Dominican Government regarding the manner in which the issue of the INSTRAW/UNIFEM merger had been handled. She recalled that General Assembly resolution 48/111 of December 1993 established very clearly what was required, namely, that the Secretary-General's report to the Economic and Social Council should be submitted through the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ). However, she explained the surprise of her Government that the requested report had not reached the ACABQ in time to be reviewed before the 1994 substantive session of the Council.

88. Referring to General Assembly resolution 49/160, she pointed out that in paragraph 6 the Assembly had asked the Commission on the Status of Women to review the matter and present its opinion. However, that was not done because the only report submitted as a background document to the Commission was document A/49/217 of 7 July 1994, and the ACABQ report (A/49/365, 7 September 1994) was not available. She considered it important that all Board members understood why her Government was taking such a stand. She reminded the Board that there was a legal agreement with the host country and that the legal implications of breaking such an agreement should be given full consideration. Moreover, the Dominican Government considered that it had not been duly consulted on the legal implications. She reiterated that the Board was entitled to know the reasons behind her Government's position in the way in which the proposed merger was dealt with.

89. The Representative of the Secretary-General explained that the report of the Secretary-General mandated by the General Assembly in its resolution 48/111 had been submitted to the Economic and Social Council through ACABQ, as requested by the Assembly. The report was issued on 7 July 1994; ACABQ was, however, able to review it only on 2 September 1994. Consequently, the Council had considered the report of the Secretary-General, together with the report of ACABQ, at its resumed substantive session on 3 November 1994. While the stock of copies of the ACABQ report was insufficient for a new circulation to the Commission, that report had been made available to all Missions through the regular distribution channels and had been distributed to delegations on the occasion of the resumed session of the Council. He added that the Secretary-General's report, which had been before both the Council and the Commission, dealt clearly with the legal implications of the proposal.

90. The representative of the International Training Centre of the ILO brought to the attention of the Board the fact that INSTRAW and the Centre had been active partners in the development of training materials based on the principle that both organizations had a comparative advantage: INSTRAW with its expertise in research, and the Centre with its expertise in training methodologies and development of training materials which gave an added value to the final product. She described the activities of the Centre and gave a brief history of the partnership between INSTRAW and the Centre, which had resulted in the production of a series of training packages on women, water supply and sanitation; women and new and renewable sources of energy; and, women, environmental management and sustainable development.

91. She extended on behalf of the Director of the Centre an invitation to the Acting Director to visit the Turin Centre in 1995. She mentioned that a draft memorandum of understanding between INSTRAW and the ILO/Turin Centre was currently under discussion and that it was hoped that it would be signed before summer 1995.

92. The representative of the INSTRAW focal point in Cuba reiterated the support for keeping the headquarters of INSTRAW in a developing country, thus closer to the reality that women confronted every day. She said that women in developing countries really needed all kinds of transformations to improve their condition and their situation. She expressed preoccupation with the arguments

presented as background for the proposed merger and emphasized the need for strengthening all United Nations institutions dealing with women's concerns.

93. The representative of ECLAC pointed out that the most recent session of the Commission on the Status of Women proved that there were new conceptual gaps and that INSTRAW could play an important role in filling these gaps.

94. The representative of ECA noted that the Secretary-General had issued instructions for improving the status of women in the Secretariat in order to increase their visibility. Along these lines, she considered that the institutions and structures for women's issues in the United Nations should also be strengthened. She mentioned that African women were advocating a movement from the concept of women in development to gender in development. In this regard it was important to clearly define the concept of gender, which would require research to expound the meaning of the concepts before they were made concrete in policies. INSTRAW played a key role in this matter, she added.

95. The Acting Director said that new social, economic and political terminology related to women's situation was emerging, and the need to prepare a comprehensive glossary of terms to be used as a reference was becoming evident. INSTRAW could undertake some initiatives in that direction.

96. The Acting Director brought to the attention of the Board of Trustees the fact that INSTRAW's report was considered only under the Third Committee of the General Assembly, under agenda item "Advancement of women: report of the Board of Trustees of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women". The Acting Director emphasized that that situation limited the Institute's capacity to provide the corresponding General Assembly committees with substantive contributions and research findings in critical areas of economic and social development processes, such as: water, environment and sustainable development, waste management, renewable sources of energy, human settlements, poverty alleviation, desertification, international migration, and violence against women migrant workers.

97. She pointed out that if those critical limitations were to be overcome, INSTRAW should report under relevant agenda items of the Second and Third Committees in order to improve the coordination and synergy of its programmes. The President of the Board suggested that the Board should consider formulating a recommendation on the matter.

VI. INSTRAW FOCAL POINTS

98. The Acting Director introduced documents INSTRAW/BT/1995/R.6 and INSTRAW/BT/1995/R.6/Add.1, explaining the functions of the focal points as stipulated in the INSTRAW mandate, article II, paragraph 2, as well as actions taken during 1994, proposals for activating focal points and actions needed to be taken by the Board. Furthermore, she explained to the Board that during the regional preparatory meeting for ECE, informal consultations, as well as a press conference (19 October 1994), were held by INSTRAW's focal points in the ECE region, who requested that one or two focal points from each region be invited

to attend the Board meeting, and they recommended that focal points from Canada, Cuba, Italy and Sri Lanka be invited.

99. The Acting Director stated that the idea behind the focal points network was that INSTRAW would serve as a bridge between the research and analysis structures and the official decision-making process, doing this in cooperation with the regional commissions. However, some problems due to logistical situations, insufficiency of resources, geographical distances within a country and telecommunications limitations made it difficult for many focal points to adequately organize and promote their activities. She suggested that the Board consider the establishment of a network of focal points that could provide geographic coverage as well as addressing thematic priorities.

100. At the request of the Acting Director, the staff member in charge of the focal point programme outlined the main points of the document. Those included a need to reactivate focal points by requesting regular feedback from them; the possibility of having more than one focal point per country; and the establishment of a coordinating focal points system at the regional level. She also mentioned the continuous requests for funding made by some focal points.

101. The President of the Board pointed out that the focal points needed to receive clear instructions of what their role was, especially if they were expected to assist in the distribution of documents and organization of activities. She further mentioned that if they were to provide feedback, they should be able to receive an analysis of such feedback in a timely manner.

102. At the request of the President of the Board, the Acting Director explained the procedures followed in the nomination of focal points. Afterwards she suggested that the Board members take the initiative to promote a better interaction among the focal points in their respective regions.

103. A few Board members expressed concern about possible problems that might arise if two or more focal points were nominated in the same country. To this end, the Board encouraged the Institute to develop a system of coordination and cooperation in work implementation of the focal points and to establish correspondents wherever required, in all regions, in accordance with its Statute.

104. A number of Board members asked about the procedure to consider when approving two or more supporting focal points in a country, notwithstanding that focal points had to be nominated by the corresponding ministry of foreign affairs.

105. A Board member pointed out that INSTRAW focal points could be classified into two categories: those that would function in collecting information for INSTRAW and disseminating INSTRAW's information, and those who would represent INSTRAW in seminars and other events.

106. Some Board members expressed concern about the follow-up mechanisms of the need to activate certain focal points. The evaluation of their performance was also raised.

107. Some Board members agreed that a regional network of focal points could be established in a democratic way and could assist INSTRAW in training programmes and seminars within the region. The President of the Board pointed out that INSTRAW needed to establish a procedure on these cases.

108. Another Board member also suggested that research and training activities conducted by focal points should be considered useful for INSTRAW.

109. A Board member explained that the focal point in her country no longer existed, and sought clarification on the procedural steps for terminating relationships with non-existing focal points.

110. The representative of the focal point in Cuba expressed her appreciation for having attended the meeting. She pointed out that there was a need to widen the network and that a more flexible process for the selection of focal points, depending on the characteristics of each one, should be examined. She explained the functions of INSTRAW's focal point in her country, and the wide range of research and training activities they were undertaking.

111. The representative of ECLAC raised three issues concerning the establishment of focal points: procedural; the role of INSTRAW's focal points in Latin America; and the need to define the real purpose of focal points and what should be expected of them.

112. The representative of ECA stressed the importance of clarifying the functions of focal points. She informed the Board that in May or June 1995, ECA would have a leadership forum for Africa in Kampala, Uganda, and extended the invitation to the Acting Director of INSTRAW to participate at this forum in order to promote INSTRAW's possible joint programming with ECA following the Platform for Action.

113. The Acting Director stated that the Institute was an intergovernmental and autonomous institution dealing with women's issues and reporting directly to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, which was the background for governmental nominations of focal points. She stated the need to evaluate the functions of the focal points, as well as the relationship of mutual benefit to both institutions. Focal points should be able to evaluate INSTRAW's capacity in responding to their requirements.

114. The President of the Board read a fax sent by the United States Council for INSTRAW regarding a letter sent by non-governmental organizations from Belarus, Moldova, Ukraine and Russia on the establishment of a regional committee called "Supporters of INSTRAW Programme in Westnis" (grouping the countries in Europe and Eastern Asia of the former USSR). The main goals of this professional association of friends of INSTRAW are: to establish, maintain and manage research studies and statistics on women's advancement; to study the impact of the economy and social life on women in the Westnis region: to respond to the needs of women's groups by providing communication and information services, training and workshops, and to facilitate women's international participation by carrying out joint programmes focusing on women's advancement.

115. The Acting Director explained that the United States Council for INSTRAW had prepared a summary report containing 11 regional initiatives undertaken by the Council under its "priorities 1995 programme" during 1994-1995, to be presented for consideration and possible inclusion in the United States national report to the Fourth World Conference on Women. Some of the priority programmes included environment, political empowerment, human rights, education, training, violence against women, refugee and migrant women and women workers.

116. She welcomed ECLAC's proposal to clarify the roles and functions of the focal points, as well as the issue of funding focal points activities, aspects that should be analysed for the next biennium of the INSTRAW programme budget. She pointed out that INSTRAW would prepare more concrete proposals for the next session of the INSTRAW Board of Trustees.

117. The Board approved by acclamation the nomination of two new focal points: "Centre d'études de promotion et d'information sur le developpement social" in Burkina Faso; and the national centre for women "Nationaal Centrum voor de Vrouw-NCV" in Suriname.

VII. STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING

118. For the deliberations on document INSTRAW/BT/1995/CRP.1, the Board decided to consider this agenda item in a closed session; therefore, only the following recommendation is reflected in this part of the report.

119. The Board recommended unanimously that the contract of the Acting Director should be extended at least until the end of February 1996 in order to secure the preparations of the next session of the Board in early 1996.

VIII. REVISION OF INSTRAW FINANCIAL AND BUDGETARY SITUATION

120. The President of the Board stated that INSTRAW's biennial budget was already approved in 1994, and for 1995 only a revision of the estimated financial requirements for the carrying-out of the year's activities was actually necessary.

121. The Board expressed concern on the implications affecting INSTRAW's staff as a result of vacancies of senior posts in the various units, particularly as it pertained to the current situation of the post of Chief of Administration, which salary was still on INSTRAW's payroll in addition to the cost of the subsequent consultancies required for its substitution. The Board requested that the matter be urgently resolved and INSTRAW be compensated accordingly.

122. The Administration Unit introduced the financial revision contained in INSTRAW/BT/1995/CRP.2, reflecting estimates in line with the programme budget approved during the Board Meeting of 1994. The document included tables and financial analyses reporting on contributions received, expenditures incurred and outstanding obligations for the year 1994. The administrative officer stressed that out of the available resources, a US$ 1 million reserve must be maintained in the trust fund to secure the Institute's forthcoming operations.

123. Included in the estimated budget for 1995, and in line with the recommendation of the Strategic Planning Committee, additional funds for INSTRAW's activities at the Fourth World Conference on Women have been secured. In addition, corresponding resources have been estimated for the acquisition and updating of the computer equipment of the Institute, as well as the installation of an electronic mail system, which will reduce considerably INSTRAW's communication costs. This matter was also one of the issues considered at the Strategic Planning Committee meeting last January.

124. The Acting Director presented a revised budget and work programme (see annex I). The proposed activities were designed in line with the overall programme of work approved by the Board for the biennium 1994-1995, but taking into consideration the availability of time, human and financial resources. While preparing the estimates, priority was given to the completion of activities already initiated, as well as those relating to INSTRAW's participation and contribution to the Fourth World Conference on Women.

125. The Board took note of the fact that the revised budget and work programme of activities presented by the Acting Director did not exceed the financial requirements as reflected in INSTRAW/BT/1995/CRP.2/Rev.1. It also noted that the Acting Director's proposal maintained a fund level that secured the US$ 1 million reserve required in the trust fund. Based on the supplementary documentation presented by the Acting Director, the Board approved the work programme and the reallocation of the financial resources, given that the requirements were within the overall ceiling approved by the Board under the programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995.

126. The representative of DDSMS commended the presentation of the budget financial situation contained in document INSTRAW/BT/1995/CRP.2/Rev.1 and indicated that requests made by the Acting Director on budgetary and personnel issues should be supported subject to the agreement of the Office of Human Resources Management.

127. Furthermore, the representative of DDSMS stated that the current financial situation of INSTRAW demanded that major efforts be made by the Acting Director, with the assistance of the Board members, to ensure that the level of contribution for research and training in 1995 and succeeding years be substantially increased. He also suggested that the report of the Board should reflect a clear appeal to donor countries ensuring that the continuous flow of contributions was maintained.

128. The President of the Board stated that it was evident that all Board members should undertake fund-raising activities in their own countries and world wide. She concluded that she would continue her endeavour in pursuing the increase of the Netherlands contribution to the Institute.

129. The Acting Director expressed INSTRAW's appreciation that the contribution made by the Government of the Netherlands for 1994 was maintained at the same level as in previous years. A similar acknowledgement was expressed in regard to the contribution made by the Government of Italy.

130. She suggested that consideration be given towards providing a cushion to offset currency conversion and some provisions to undertake fund-raising activities and to negotiate contributions made to the Institute in national currencies.

131. The Board welcomed the appointment of the Acting Director, and welcomed the decisions and actions taken by her since 1 January 1995.

132. The Board members did not support the reclassification of posts in the Professional category, emphasizing the recommendations made by the Strategic Planning Committee at the meeting last January, which mandated the immediate filling of vacancies at INSTRAW. The Board decided that the staffing table of INSTRAW should remain as approved in the original programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995. It asked that due flexibility should be exercised in the filling of vacant posts, as required by the Institute's work programme.

133. The Board strongly recommended that the contracts of all INSTRAW staff, including that of the Acting Director, be extended at least until after the next Board meeting in February 1996.

134. In addition, the Board unanimously supported the recommendation of the Acting Director to initiate the necessary action with the Office of Human Resources and Management (OHRM) for the establishment at INSTRAW of three national officer posts, and for the reclassification of local posts, which include two G-6 posts to G-7, as reflected in document INSTRAW/BT/1995/CRP.2/Rev.1.

135. The Acting Director requested the Board to favourably consider undertaking all the necessary provisions to solve the logistical arrangements to ensure an appropriate participation of INSTRAW at the non-governmental organizations' Forum on Women and the Fourth World Conference on Women, including an advance preparatory mission.

136. The Acting Director suggested that INSTRAW's delegation to the Conference be composed of the President of the Board, the Acting Director and at least three staff members. Regarding INSTRAW's participation in the Forum, the Board should consider the participation of two staff members for each of the four panels that INSTRAW will be conducting at the Forum. In addition, qualified interns who have been involved in the work of INSTRAW may also form part of the Institute's delegation, at their own expense and initiative.

137. The Board approved the composition of INSTRAW's delegations to the Conference and to the Forum, subject to relevant directives.

1. Conclusions

138. The Board welcomed the appointment of the Acting Director until the end of 1995 and the action taken by her as Acting Director of INSTRAW since 1 January 1995. The Board recommended the extension of her appointment, as well as all other INSTRAW staff, at least until after the next Board meeting, in

order not to jeopardize preparations for the sixteenth session of the Board of Trustees.

139. The Board urged the Acting Director to initiate the process for the appointment, as soon as possible, of the Chief of Research and Training; the Chief of Information, Communication, and Documentation, and the Chief of Administration and Finance. The Board asked that flexibility be exercised in filling these and other vacancies to implement the programmes of INSTRAW.

140. The Board expressed serious concerns about the drain on resources by the continued encumbrance of a former P-5 post, and the subsequent consultancies in the administrative section of the Institute, and requested that the matter be resolved in an urgent manner and that INSTRAW be compensated accordingly. The P-5 post in the administrative section should be retained at the same level by INSTRAW.

141. The Board recommended the strengthening and upgrading of the New York Liaison Office to facilitate cooperation between INSTRAW, other United Nations agencies and donor countries.

142. To enhance the fund-raising capacity of the Institute, all Board members are encouraged to assist the efforts of the Acting Director in raising funds for the Institute. In this connection, the Board suggested enlisting the valuable assistance of the Secretary-General in gaining the support of Governments and agencies to raise the necessary funding to enable the Institute to effectively carry out its mandate.

143. The Board approved the proposal to request of the Office of Human Resources Management the application of the national officers' scale to three posts for qualified personnel of the Institute. Furthermore, the grade and salaries of all local staff should be reviewed and upgraded, where appropriate.

144. The Board also approved that the facilities of INSTRAW should be modernized and upgraded, particularly in the area of data processing, communication and printing equipment, including the installation of E-mail and Internet systems, and CD-ROM of the work of the Institute. This was aimed at broadening the promotion of INSTRAW's work and increasing its visibility.

145. The Board took into consideration the human and financial resources in the approved budget to ensure and secure an effective implementation of INSTRAW's work plan, with due consideration to the flow of voluntary contributions into the Institute's Trust Fund. The Board approved that adequate allocation of financial resources be made so as to ensure INSTRAW's participation at the Conference.

146. The Board advised the Acting Director of the Institute to devise new possible schemes for marketing and disseminating INSTRAW's publications beyond the existing distribution mechanisms, to extend their outreach to a greater number of research institutions, universities and other outlets.

147. The Board noted with appreciation the new format of the report on the financial and budgetary status presented by the Acting Director, and

approved the revised budgetary allocations for 1995 contained in INSTRAW/BT/1995/CRP.2/Rev.1, as amended during the meeting.

IX. OTHER MATTERS RELATED TO THE FUNCTIONING OF THE INSTITUTE

148. The first part of the time allocated to this agenda item was dedicated to the presentation of the new multimedia modular training package, Women, Environmental Management and Sustainable Development as presented in paragraphs 70 to 73 of document INSTRAW/BT/1995/R.2. The Acting Director explained that this training package was prepared in collaboration with the International Training Centre of the ILO. She pointed out that the training manual consisted of five substantive parts: Implementation of Agenda 21, INSTRAW and the United Nations system activities; Women and environmental health; Women as agents of change in the development sector; Women as managers of the environment; and Women, environmental indicators and capacity-building programme. The staff member of INSTRAW responsible for the preparation of the overall structure, the substantive content and target groups, also presented to the Board the cost-estimates for translation of the package into Spanish and French as well as the costs for reproduction and dissemination. The representative of the International Training Centre of the ILO elaborated on the multimedia modular training methodology and the systematic approach to training conceived for this material and explained the composition of the package.

149. The Board members appraised the new training package Women, Environmental Management and Sustainable Development and recommended considering allocations of financial resources for translation and dissemination of the package.

150. In considering agenda item 10, the Acting Director introduced document INSTRAW/BT/1995/INF/3 and brought to the attention of the Board various invitations received by INSTRAW from the United Nations system to contribute and participate in various meetings, from academic and non-governmental institutions and from joint programmes with research centres, as well as several requests made by local and some international non-governmental organizations for financial support. Nevertheless, some Board members expressed concern about INSTRAW's participation in meetings or programme activities due to budgetary conditions.

151. The President and the Board members expressed their appreciation to the Acting Director for making INSTRAW more visible and noted that further action in this area should be undertaken according to the priority areas approved for INSTRAW's programme of work.

152. A few Board members requested more information and further clarification on the scope of possible cooperation with the institutions mentioned in the document under consideration.

153. The Acting Director brought to the attention of the Board of Trustees the need for an editorial panel and a reviewers panel, as well as a publication advisory panel for INSTRAW's material. These panels could be composed by one member of the Strategic Planning Committee, who could be the current President

of the Board, one Board Member willing to accept this task and three or four well-known researchers.

154. Some Board members strongly recommended changing the present format of INSTRAW News and improving the quality of the articles. The Board also recommended that for each INSTRAW publication a budget for translation and printing should be allocated.

155. Regarding INSTRAW's liaison office in New York, whose main task is to serve as support to all INSTRAW activities in the United Nations, the Acting Director expressed her gratitude to the professional staff members for undertaking various assignments. She also pointed out that the office space and equipment were not adequate for efficient representation and for all INSTRAW activities, despite the high rent being paid.

156. The Board recommended that INSTRAW's liaison office in New York be upgraded.

X. DATE OF THE NEXT SESSION OF THE BOARD

157. On this item the Acting Director explained that in order to agree to a concrete date for the Board of Trustees session, the following factors should be considered: (a) INSTRAW's biennial programme; (b) that the budgetary-fiscal regular United Nations calendar was 1 January to 31 December; (c) that the United Nations Pledging Conference regularly took place in November every year, when Member States announced their contributions for the following year. Therefore, the boards of various United Nations bodies and agencies were usually organized six months prior to the following budget year. Notwithstanding, INSTRAW Board of Trustees met in February or in April to approve the programme and budget of the current biennium. Referring to the various comments made during the discussions of several agenda items, she stressed that the date of the next session of the Board should be analysed in connection with the preparations of the substantive work programme and budget for the biennium 1996-1997.

158. A Board member suggested that the Strategic Planning Committee Meeting should take place immediately after the Conference in Beijing, in order to analyse the outcome and prepare the programme of work and budget to be presented and approved by the Board at the very beginning of next year. The Board agreed that the next session should take place as early as possible in 1996.

XI. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE BOARD ON ITS FIFTEENTH SESSION

159. At its eighth meeting, on 28 April 1995, the Board adopted the report on its fifteenth session (INSTRAW/BT/1995/R.7 and Add.1-11).

XII. ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION

A. Opening and duration of the session

160. The fifteenth session of the Board of Trustees of INSTRAW was held at the Institute's headquarters from 24 to 28 April 1995. The Board held eight meetings.

161. The session was opened by Els Postel-Coster in her capacity as President of the Board. In welcoming the members of the Board, she noted that the session was taking place at a critical moment for INSTRAW. She expressed that the deliberations should consider how its work could be best enhanced in the future. She pointed out that there would be no sustainable development, no end to the violation of human rights, no stabilization of the world population and no equality, as long as women's concerns were marginalized in the mainstream of political and economic development policies. Therefore, INSTRAW would have to reconsider its working programme in the light of those developments and also in relation to the Fourth World Conference on Women. She expressed her gratitude to the Acting Director for all the tasks she had undertaken and achieved since her appointment.

162. The representative of the Secretary-General, Ji Chaozhu, addressed the Board. He expressed his pleasure in representing the Secretary-General of the United Nations at the fifteenth session of INSTRAW's Board of Trustees and reiterated the Secretary-General's appreciation to the Government of the Dominican Republic. He pointed out that the Secretary-General's message to the world community on the occasion of the International Women's Day, delivered at the World Summit for Social Development, had emphasized the need for women to realize their full rights and potential if solutions to the world social, economic and political problems were to be achieved with any measure of success. He recalled that women's concerns had been at the centre of many of the global conferences, such as the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development; the World Conference on Human Rights; the International Conference on Population and Development; and the United Nations World Summit for Social Development. He indicated that the wide recognition of the empowerment of women was a central factor in addressing macro-development issues such as population; environmental sustainability; poverty alleviation; human development; food scarcity; energy and urbanization.

163. The representative of the Secretary-General highlighted INSTRAW's work in the area of statistics, time-use study, including women's unpaid work in national accounts and statistics, and for the integration of it into national and global economies. He stressed the importance of INSTRAW's programme on water and enhancing the role and participation of women in the management of water supplies. In that connection, he pointed out that in cooperation with DDSMS, a joint training seminar had been organized in Namibia. He also expressed the interest of DDSMS to work together with INSTRAW in the organization of training seminars on women, environmental management and sustainable development.

164. He pointed out that the proposal for the merger between INSTRAW and UNIFEM would be discussed at the fiftieth session of the General Assembly following the

Fourth World Conference on Women to be held in Beijing. In that respect, he emphasized that whatever the ultimate result of the deliberations might be, the Institute's role and mandate would continue to hold a very important place in the development arena.

165. An opening statement was made by Jacqueline Malagón, Minister of Education of the Dominican Republic and ex officio member of the Board representing the host country. On behalf of her Government, she welcomed the Board and emphasized the importance that her Government attached to the proposed merger of INSTRAW and UNIFEM. She brought to the attention of the Board resolution 95/10 of the United Nations Development Fund for Women, adopted by the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board on 6 April 1995 in New York, which referred to the administrative and financial situation of UNIFEM. Upon reading the resolution she concluded that it gave a totally new perspective on the situation of the proposal for merger and that, therefore, the merger was inadmissible.

166. In the statement submitted by the Minister, she highlighted the legal basis for the establishment of INSTRAW by quoting the relevant General Assembly and Council resolutions. She pointed out that the proposed institutional reforms to the United Nations institutions dealing with the advancement of women should be an integral part of the general reform of the United Nations, as well as of the Economic and Social Council and the other organs of the system, since their initial mandate would have to deal with the issues of economic, social and cultural development and peace building.

167. In concluding, Ms. Malagón welcomed all the Board members to the Dominican Republic especially those who were attending for the first time. She requested that her oral statement be published as an annex, following the practice initiated in 1994. (See annex II.)

168. In her statement the Acting Director pointed out that, even at risk of constant repetition, women and men should participate on an equal basis in every sector of economic and social activity. An appraisal of the major accomplishments achieved in the area of the advancement of women since the formal establishment of INSTRAW by General Assembly resolution 3520 (XXX) of 15 December 1975, showed that much was still to be obtained in the area of research and training, particularly on the impact of science and technology in women's daily life, and in the translation of accumulated existing knowledge into policy decisions, and on the efficiency of the institutions in promoting sustainable development.

169. The Acting Director highlighted that true development and democracy would be a reality when meaningful participation was extended to all sectors of the population. She stated in addition that obvious differences exist in opportunities and individual skills and abilities, as well as in cultural practices and perceptions. Those could constitute serious limitations to democratic development, unless appropriate stimulus and incentives were applied. She added that there was sufficient evidence to prove that cultural diversity and interaction among peoples constituted rich synergism for progress.

B. Attendance

170. The following members of the Board attended the session: Ihsan Abdalla Algabshawi (Sudan), Selma Acuner (Turkey), Fatima Benlismane Hassar (Morocco), Pilar Escario Rodriguez-Spiteri (Spain), Aída González Martínez (Mexico), Noelie Kangoye (Burkina Faso), Amara Pongsapich (Thailand), Els Postel-Coster (the Netherlands), Gail Saunders (Bahamas), Renata Siemienska-Zochowska (Poland) and Sudarsono (Indonesia).

171. The following ex officio members of the Board attended: the representative of the Secretary-General (Under-Secretary-General, Department for Development Support and Management Services); the representative of the host country (Dominican Republic); representatives of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA); the representative of the Economic Commission for Latin American and the Caribbean (ECLAC); and the Acting Director.

172. The Director of the Division of Public Administration and Development Management of the United Nations Department for Development Support and Management Services, as well as representatives of the International Training Centre of the ILO, UNDP, UNIFEM and UNICEF attended the session.

173. A representative from the INSTRAW focal point in Cuba, Federación de Mujeres Cubanas (FMC), was also present at the session.

C. Election of officers

174. At its first meeting, in accordance with rule 7 of its rules of procedure, the Board re-elected the following officers by acclamation:

President: Els Postel-Coster (The Netherlands)

Vice-President: Fatima Hassar (Morocco)

Rapporteur: Ihsan Abdalla Algabshawi (Sudan).

D. Agenda

175. At its first meeting the Board adopted the following agenda (INSTRAW/BT/1995/INF/2/Add.1) by consensus:

1. Opening of the session.
2. Adoption of the agenda.
3. Election of officers.
4. Draft Platform for Action - Beijing 1995.
5. Meeting of the Strategic Planning Committee: implementation of the recommendations.

6. Progress report by the Acting Director, with special attention to the preparations of activities related to the Fourth World Conference on Women, to be held in Beijing.

7. Review of the programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995, and the budgetary situation in light of the Pledging Conference; staffing arrangements of the Institute.

8. Implications of recent intergovernmental decisions related to INSTRAW and the proposed stronger interaction with the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Commission on the Status of Women, the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) and UNIFEM; plans of interaction of INSTRAW and UNIFEM after 1995.

8a. Follow-up action after the Fourth World Conference on Women.

9. INSTRAW and the United Nations fiftieth anniversary: INSTRAW's contribution.

10. INSTRAW focal points.

11. Other matters related to the functioning of the Institute.

12. Date of next Board session.

13. Adoption of the report of the session.

E. Closing remarks

176. The President of the Board, Professor Els Postel-Coster, expressed positive appreciation and gratitude for the presence of Mr. Ji Chaozhu, as representative of the Secretary-General: "We take it as an indication to the value attached to this Institute at the highest level of the United Nations Secretariat, and we asked Mr. Guido Bertucci, just before his departure to convey to the Secretary-General our positive appreciation for the attention paid to INSTRAW, and also transmit to him the high expectations we have on his future support. If INSTRAW, in spite of a period of extreme trial and affliction is still going strong and is still able to present an impressive list of initiatives and activities, it is no doubt thanks to the extraordinary dynamic approach and dedication of the Acting Director, Mrs. Martha Dueñas-Loza. It is perhaps not an exaggeration to state that she saved the life of INSTRAW by her leadership in this stressful period".

Notes

1/ National Training Seminar on Women, Water Supply and Sanitation, Windhoek, 20-25 November 1994: report distributed to the Board. Women, Water Supply and Sanitation. Training Seminar, Georgetown, 31 January-4 February 1994: report is available. National Training Workshop on Women, Water Supply and Sanitation, Quito, 27 June-1 July: report in preparation.

Annex I

REVISED BUDGET AND WORK PROGRAMME: PROPOSALS OF THE ACTING DIRECTOR BEFORE THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF INSTRAW

To: All the Members of the Board

Conference room paper CRP/2 presents a revision of INSTRAW budget on the basis of the programmes of activities as originally approved during the XIV Session of INSTRAW Board of Trustees, under the PROGRAMME BUDGET for the biennium 1994-1995 (INSTRAW/BT/1994/R.3).

After a careful assessment of the current financial situation of INSTRAW, as well as the commitments it is compelled to meet in order to successfully carry out its programme of activities during the current year, and in compliance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1994/30, I am herewith presenting a proposal for the reformulation of the Institute programme implementation for 1995 in accordance with paragraph 111 of the report presented by INSTRAW's Board of Trustees during the resumed session of the Economic and Social Council, held in New York in November 1994 (E/1994/68, 7 June 1994).

Priority has been focused on the activities related to INSTRAW participation and contribution at the Fourth World Conference on Women, to be held in Beijing in September of this year. For this purpose, the conduct of several workshops and panels relevant to the fields of INSTRAW's past and current work have been envisaged within the present financial analysis. By the same token particular importance has been granted to the production of INSTRAW substantive publications and information material, which is intended to be produced in several languages (i.e. Arabic, Chinese). This output includes the production of a CD-ROM on the work of the Institute, aimed to broaden the promotion of INSTRAW's work and to enhance its visibility. A modest allocation for purchase of publications research material has also been estimated.

Significant consideration has also been given to the need to upgrade INSTRAW's data processing and communication equipment. In this respect the installation of an E-Mail and internet systems and the acquisition of a new switchboard/telephone equipment have been included in this budget estimate.

While preparing the exercise, due consideration was given to aspects such as realistic time-frames and the Institute availability to secure the human resources that would be required for the effective implementation of its work-plan. In addition, the flow of voluntary contributions into the Institute Trust Fund has been duly noted, while considering the financial implications resulting from the Institute potential initiatives and endeavours.

Please bear in mind that the present proposal would entail the deferment of unused financial resources originally allocated to other programme outputs which have not been implemented as of yet, and would need to be postponed. Therefore, your careful consideration to this proposed reformulation is of utmost importance.

Due attention should be drawn to the aspects that must be taken into account, such as the Trust Fund balance and contribution flow, while considering the biennial budget for period 1996-1997.

In this respect, it is essential that adequate funding be allocated for the reposition of office and general operating equipment, given the obsolete state of a significant portion of INSTRAW's inventory that must be disposed of.

By the same token, some areas of INSTRAW's building must undergo significant maintenance work and repairs. Furthermore, the office space available is in many cases inadequate, particularly in the areas assigned to the Research & Training Unit, Printing Shop, Library and Archives.

This matter should be given due consideration since the inoperative state of office equipment as well as the inadequate office space has a negative effect on the quality and efficiency of the overall output of the Institute.

Annex II

STATEMENT OF JACQUELINE MALAGÓN TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF INSTRAW AT ITS FIFTEENTH SESSION

Santo Domingo, 24 April 1995

On behalf of the Government of the Dominican Republic and in my capacity as representative of the host country of the INSTRAW Board of Trustees, I should like to welcome most cordially the representative of the Secretary-General, Under-Secretary-General Mr. Ji Chaozhu, the members of the Board and the observers who are here with us for this fifteenth session of the Board.

We are especially pleased to welcome the new members of the Board and would like to express to you, Madam President, our satisfaction at your assumption of the Presidency. We hope that your stay in Santo Domingo will be a very pleasant one indeed.

Madam President, I had prepared a statement for this first meeting of the Board of Trustees. However, on Friday, 14 April, we received news of the adoption of a resolution at an extraordinary meeting of the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Population Fund (UNDP/UNFPA) which, to our way of thinking, is of fundamental importance and must be brought to your urgent attention. Consequently, we have decided to distribute the text of our statement and to read out the resolution of the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Population Fund for the information of all of you. We have only the English text, as an official translation of the resolution has not yet been made. I apologize for reading the resolution in English. The text reads as follows:

"95/10. United Nations Development Fund for Women

The Executive Board,

1. Notes with deep concern the statement made by the Administrator and the Director to the second regular session of the Executive Board and expresses its deep concern over the serious financial and administrative situation in UNIFEM;

2. Notes the efforts undertaken to date by the Administrator and the Director to meet these concerns;

3. Requests the Administrator in cooperation with the Director and the Consultative Committee:

(a) To present as soon as possible a detailed analysis of the reasons for, the scope of and implications, at all levels, for UNIFEM and UNDP of the financial and administrative situation in UNIFEM, including an up-to-

date balance sheet of the Fund's finances and details of the operation of the Fund's operational reserve and guidelines governing access to it;

(b) To present as soon as possible a report on all the matters concerning steps taken to strengthen the financial, administrative and managerial oversight of UNIFEM, including UNDP's role in providing supervision and systems;

4. Decides that UNIFEM should re-examine the operations of the Fund including its administrative costs, and its commitments as presented to the Executive Board, including all its financial activities in relation to the Fourth World Conference on Women, and that UNIFEM should undertake all efforts to reduce the size and number of its commitments and disbursements in accordance with projected income and to report on these efforts to the Executive Board, bearing in mind the special responsibilities of UNIFEM with regard to the Fourth World Conference on Women;

5. Also decides, based on the information given to the Executive Board on the commitments and planned activities for the Fourth World Conference on Women of the Fund, that UNIFEM as of today shall not enter into any new commitments prior to the Executive Board deliberations on the issues contained in the documents requested above;

6. Requests the Administrator in cooperation with the Director to convene an informal meeting of the Executive Board in May 1995 at the latest, in order to provide a progress report of the aforementioned issues as well as a synopsis of the internal audit report;

7. Also requests the Administrator to inform the Board of Auditors of the Executive Board's wish that UNIFEM be included with priority in its current programme of work;

8. Decides to consider, at its annual session 1995, the terms of reference and means of financing for an external evaluation of the Fund;

9. Decides in the light of the above and awaiting the outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women, to postpone consideration on the future direction of UNIFEM to the first regular session of 1996." a/

[The resolution was adopted by the Executive Board of UNDP/UNFPA on 7 April 1995.]

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a/ The text appears as it was read by Mrs. Malagón. Paragraph 3 (c) was omitted in the oral presentation. It reads:

"(c) To draw up a plan, without delay, which will put the Fund's finances, administration and management on a sound basis, including the possible need for Executive Board actions, and present it to the Executive Board at the annual session in 1995."

Madam President, distinguished members of the INSTRAW Board of Trustees, this resolution, which has not been circulated, completely changes the nature of the proposal to merge INSTRAW and UNIFEM. I will not dwell at any length on the whys and the wherefores which are obvious to everyone; we therefore consider such a merger more unacceptable than ever. Each one of you must arrive at his or her own conclusions and make appropriate recommendations. It is for you to take a position on this matter.

On behalf of the Government and people of the Dominican Republic, I should like finally to take this opportunity to wish you a pleasant stay in Santo Domingo and express my wishes for the success of this meeting. The traditional Dominican hospitality is celebrating your presence in Santo Domingo. Welcome.

UNITED
NATIONS

E

Economic and Social Council

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20 June 1995

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Substantive session of 1995
Geneva, 26 June-28 July 1995
Item 2 of the provisional agenda*

DEVELOPMENT OF AFRICA, INCLUDING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS, NEW AGENDA FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AFRICA IN THE 1990s

Report of the Secretary-General

SUMMARY

According to the schedule for follow-up, monitoring and evaluation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF), adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 46/151 of 18 December 1991 and contained in annex II thereto, the Economic and Social Council would devote part of its high-level segment to the consideration of the implementation of the New Agenda. At the 5th plenary meeting of its organizational session for 1995, held in February 1995, the Council decided that the theme for the high-level segment would be "Development of Africa including the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s".

The present report analyses some critical issues facing Africa in the implementation of the New Agenda and suggests some measures for consideration that could contribute to enabling African countries and the international community to tackle these issues and put Africa on the path of sustainable development. The discussion in the Economic and Social Council should assist not only in the continuing process of implementing UN-NADAF but also in the mid-term review that will be undertaken by the General Assembly in 1996.

The report is divided into two parts. Part one deals with a selective list of policy issues for consideration by the Economic and Social Council while part two provides not only an assessment of the implementation of UN-NADAF but also more detailed background information on the issued covered in part one.

* E/1995/100.

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PART ONE: SOME PRIORITY ISSUES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AFRICA FOR CONSIDERATION AT THE HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

I. BACKGROUND

1. In response to the decline in economic performance that several African countries have been experiencing since the 1970s, Africa and the international community launched various initiatives aimed at Africa's economic recovery and development. Within Africa, the major regional strategies were the Lagos Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Monrovia Strategy for the Economic Development of Africa, 1980-2000 1/ (LPA, 1980); Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery, 1986-1990 2/ (APPER, 1985); the African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programmes for Socio-Economic Recovery and Transformation 3/ (AAF-SAP, 1989); and the Abuja Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community 4/ (PAEC, 1991). At the level of the international community, the major strategic framework of action in the 1980s was the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990 5/ (UNPAAERD, 1986) which incorporated the objectives of APPER.

2. Most of the above initiatives were only partly implemented. The main reasons included a shortage of resources, both domestic and external, the lack of an appropriate macroeconomic framework in several countries and, in some cases, various crises - political and/or natural - that interrupted economic activity. The situation in the mid-1990s remains critical and, more than ever, calls for continued engagement by both the African countries and their development partners.

3. The General Assembly, at its forty-sixth session in 1991, adopted the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF). The New Agenda kindled the hope that the end of the cold war would bring ample opportunities for international cooperation to promote Africa's development, especially at a time when many countries in the continent had embarked upon democratization and were vigorously pursuing economic reforms. The relevance of the New Agenda to Africa's development has since been reaffirmed in global and sectoral meetings including the Tokyo International Conference on African Development held in October 1993 and the recently concluded World Summit for Social Development, held in Copenhagen.

4. Four years after the adoption of the New Agenda, and one year before its mid-term review, the results are mixed. The social and economic situation, on the whole, continues to be unsatisfactory. However, the overall lacklustre performance conceals satisfactory achievements by a large number of countries under reform agendas that have led to significant economic and political liberalization. It is encouraging to note that as a result, eight African countries achieved or exceeded the 6 per cent annual gross domestic product (GDP) growth target set under the New Agenda. Several, while falling below the target, have achieved consistent positive growth over the past few years.

5. The majority of African countries are committed to macroeconomic and sectoral reforms. African decision makers are increasingly aware of the

fundamental importance of human resource development and capacity-building, and the need to integrate population and environment issues into their development strategy. Despite the proliferation of conflicts, the majority of countries have made progress in consolidating democracy and maintaining an environment for peace accompanied by a significant reduction in military spending.

6. These positive developments are encouraging. Nevertheless, the starting-point for any discussion must be the premise that UN-NADAF has not yet been translated into performance. There are shortfalls in the national effort in some countries because of deficiencies in human, institutional and financial capacities to implement development programmes and projects. Likewise, elements of the external environment, including the debt burden, declining commodity prices and increased competition for concessional resources, continue to negatively affect Africa's economic recovery. At the level of the United Nations system, the System-wide Plan of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development has yet to be fully translated into operational collaborative programmes and projects.

7. Recognizing the need for a concerted effort to maximize the support provided by the United Nations system to Africa's development, the Secretary-General has stressed in the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) the need to develop further joint practical initiatives with clear targets. ACC has established a high-level steering committee co-chaired by the Executive Secretary of ECA and the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to present a set of concrete proposals for ACC's approval at its next session in October 1995. The areas that have been identified for this purpose include availability and management of water; sustainable food security; human development and capacity-building; and follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development, with particular emphasis on poverty alleviation. The steering group has entrusted to small ad hoc groups of concerned ACC members the task of developing specific proposals in each of these areas. The steering group itself concentrates on the consideration of ways and means of enhancing political and financial support.

II. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

8. The development of Africa as noted above is under discussion in a variety of forums within and outside the United Nations system. As noted above, the Secretary-General, through ACC, has launched an initiative to coordinate efforts under a set of themes for action. The discussion in the Economic and Social Council can complement and reinforce these efforts by focusing attention on selected areas where a major change or shift of emphasis is needed, particularly at the international level. In order to assist in the discussion some specific suggestions are given below, grouped under five broad headings: trade, finance and external debt, preventive development, capacity-building and South-South cooperation. They by no means constitute a comprehensive statement of a development strategy and their success will require many other complementary elements, particularly a commitment to political and economic reform in Africa and an enhanced flow of resources from the international community to support domestic efforts in Africa.

A. Trade and finance

9. Reforms now under way in many African countries, which aim to boost fiscal revenues by increasing the efficiency of tax administrations while simultaneously strengthening controls on public disbursement, should lead to increased public savings. A shift in the distribution of public spending towards developmental expenditures, particularly for items like health, education and poverty alleviation, would also be needed. At the same time, reforms will be required on the part of African countries to boost private savings which today lag significantly behind those in other regions of the world. The share of total saving in GDP was 18 per cent for Africa in 1990-1994 compared with 31 per cent for Asia. Governments urgently need to tackle this through the introduction of appropriate macroeconomic policies and strategies including financial sector reforms. Nevertheless the development effort of African countries will need to be supported by a substantial inflow of external resources, in the form both of new resources and of debt relief.

10. While development assistance remains critical, the main focus of development cooperation in the mid-1990s is economic and trade relations. The prospects for development in Africa depend in many ways on the capacity of African countries to benefit fully from the prospects for trade expansion generated by the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations and to attract a greater volume of the growing flow of private investment to developing countries. Some suggestions relating to these two issues are given below.

1. External assistance and debt

11. Overseas development assistance to Africa has been on a downward trend during the 1990s. Given the magnitude of requirements, this trend needs to be reversed. External assistance, directed at priority areas, can help in the creation of conditions of lasting security and stability in Africa, support the process of capacity-building and political reforms, and assist in a more meaningful process of regional integration.

12. Africa's external debt continues to be a major impediment to the achievement of accelerated growth and development. Despite relief measures affecting both official and private debt, the estimated burden of debt at the end of 1994 was still equivalent to 255 per cent of exports and 83 per cent of gross national product (GNP), figures that were significantly higher than in other regions. In recognizing this burden, the Paris Club in December 1994 introduced the G-7 Naples relief measures allowing for up to 67 per cent stock reduction under certain conditions. Analysis shows that even under the most optimistic scenarios of the current initiatives, 24 African countries will have debt levels that are considered to be unsustainable. This implies a need for new debt initiatives along the lines suggested by some of Africa's partners. Proposed new approaches include:

(a) An improvement in the Naples terms by raising the ceiling, by extending the relief to cover all types of Paris Club non-concessional debt, by softening the eligibility criteria, and by examining approaches to relieve the non-Paris Club debt burden;

(b) Removal of all remaining concessional (official development assistance (ODA)) debt (for example, through conversions);

(c) Reduction of all remaining private short- and long-term debt through the expansion of buy-back mechanisms;

(d) Introduction of innovative mechanisms to reduce the increasing multilateral debt burden perhaps building on the proposal of the Chancellor of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland regarding the sale of International Monetary Fund (IMF) gold.

13. Consideration could be given by the Economic and Social Council to ways of promoting a multipronged debt reduction strategy and new initiatives with regard to the external debt of African countries, including proposals for consideration by bilateral, multilateral or private creditors.

2. The Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations Agreements: enhancing Africa's competitiveness

14. The Uruguay Round Agreements provide African countries with an opportunity to consolidate and expand favourable conditions of access to the markets of developed countries. However, in the short to medium term, African countries are likely to face reduced export earnings and higher import prices.

15. If the long-term gains arising from trade liberalization are to be realized, it will be necessary for African countries to liberalize their trade and production structures. In order to cope with the immediate consequences of the Uruguay Round and to benefit fully from the gains arising from trade liberalization, African countries will have to transform their production and trade structures to face the challenge from an increasingly competitive global market environment. The priority areas include improving agricultural productivity; technological capacity-building to improve quality and supply capabilities; strengthening regional and subregional markets; improving investment conditions; and diversification to higher value-added production through processing.

16. The assistance of the international community will be required to support African countries in offsetting these adverse consequences. Specifically, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and other organizations have suggested measures that would include:

(a) Deferring the removal of the trade preferences that African countries were enjoying;

(b) Implementing in advance, and without staging, agreed most-favoured-nation (MFN) tariff reductions on products of export interest to African countries that do not enjoy preferential treatment;

(c) Providing financial support to assist African countries in dealing with balance-of-payments pressures and transitional strains consequent on policy reforms;

(d) Assisting African countries in their efforts to achieve diversification and ultimately to enhance their competitiveness in world trade and, to that end, making an adequate special contribution to finance the preparatory phase of commodity diversification projects and programmes as called for in General Assembly resolution 49/142.

17. The Economic and Social Council's deliberations in this regard should serve to further the consideration of these and other measures in the relevant forums.

3. Enhancing foreign direct investment (FDI) flows to Africa

18. The recent surge in gross portfolio and foreign direct investment (FDI) flows to developing countries as a whole has, by and large, bypassed Africa. While for the most part African countries have put in place the required legislation to attract foreign direct investment, FDI flows to Africa have been small and have concentrated around few countries, particularly oil-exporting and mineral-rich ones. Given the growing importance of private investment in the flow of resources and technology to developing countries, specific measures to attract such investments to Africa are urgently needed.

19. The flow of private investment is strongly influenced by perceptions about political stability and the prospects for economic growth. The positive developments that have taken place in recent years in several African countries need to be protected. In addition, African countries should consider further measures to improve the investment climate, including further liberalization of FDI legislation, simplification of administrative procedures for foreign investors, conclusion of bilateral investment protection and promotion treaties and accession to various multilateral treaties facilitating FDI flows.

20. The flow of investments also depends on the opportunities available for this purpose. Production for exports, infrastructure development and public enterprise reforms and privatization have been important sources of such opportunities in recent years. The potential for these varies from country to country and appropriate promotional packages need to be developed involving measures like export-processing zones, "build-operate-transfer" (BOT) schemes for infrastructure, debt-for-equity swaps, liberalization of rules on portfolio investment, schemes to reattract "flight capital", and so forth.

21. The international community should assist by helping to project the potential for development and by providing technical expertise to develop local capacity for investment promotion, strengthening the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) and supporting institution-building and training relating to foreign investment matters. More substantial assistance could be given by incentives guarantees and financial support that reduce risks as perceived by private investors.

22. The Economic and Social Council's deliberations should serve to give further impetus to these efforts.

B. Poverty eradication and human development

23. A commitment to the eradication of absolute poverty is one of the major outcomes of the World Summit for Social Development, which also recognized the need to pay particular attention to Africa. Given the high incidence of poverty in most African countries and projections that suggest a further worsening of the situation, concerted effort is required to translate this commitment into purposive action at the country level.

24. The Secretary-General's initiative on Africa referred to earlier includes the above as one of its areas of attention. The other thematic areas - water, food security and human development - are also clearly linked to this objective. It is expected that this initiative will lead to a more concerted and coordinated effort by the United Nations system in the provision of basic sccial services and in the promotion of sustainable livelihood.

25. UN-NADAF also gave special focus to increased productive employment and human development, particularly the areas of life expectancy, integration of women into development, child and maternal mortality, nutrition, health, water and sanitation, basic education and shelter.

26. The commitment to poverty eradication and human development must be reflected in timebound national strategies which, as agreed in the World Summit for Social Development, should be formulated by the end of 1996. The commitment of the international community to supporting these national strategies must be demonstrated tangibly through the provision of adequate assistance.

C. Crisis prevention and management

27. Certain development activities are aimed at crisis management and prevention by strengthening national, regional and international capacities to reduce and/or mitigate the impact of disasters and after-emergencies in "crisis situations".

28. Food security is an essential pivot for crisis management and prevention. A combination of strategies for food security include the establishment of early-warning systems. At the national level, the basis for food security has to be provided by policies to promote sustainable food and agricultural production (see annex), 6/ by intensifying the cultivation of both food crops and cash crops, by establishing land rights/ownership and land reform, by investing in rural infrastructure, and by increased access to credit and markets; but in addition to production strategies, the capacity for emergency response needs to be enhanced by strengthened facilities for monitoring weather, food production and supplies, improved logistics and increased stocks of basic foods, particularly grain, at community levels.

29. In many cases a regional or subregional response is required. For example, the countries that straddle the borders of the moist savannahs which occupy about 31 per cent of sub-Saharan Africa could collaborate to develop this area, which receives a regular rainfall, good solar radiation and has relatively good soils, for food production. The possibility of a regional emergency fund to

finance the purchase of grain as well as other emergency supplies could be investigated. Such a regional fund may be a way of enhancing food security that is lower in cost than a purely national response. The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), in collaboration with the countries concerned and bilateral and regional donors, could be asked to examine specific possibilities.

30. At the international level there is need for support to national efforts for crisis management and prevention by:

(a) Supporting the development of storage, transport and communication facilities so as to promote trade between food surplus and food deficit countries and support regional food strategies;

(b) Providing additional food aid to create additional incomes for households through food-for-work projects, such as construction of roads, new schools and land improvement;

(c) Assisting in the establishment of early-warning systems or their expansion where they exist and facilitating technical assistance from organizations such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) to other national and regional systems;

(d) Taking steps for the mobilization of resources for the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (A/49/84/Add.2, annex, appendix II), especially for training and technology and anti-desertification programmes;

(e) Supporting the installation and strengthening of a network of meteorological and hydrologic observation stations in support of agriculture and water management;

(f) Supporting the Peace Fund that was set up in November 1993 by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) within its already established Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution. This mechanism can have a direct positive impact on development at the subregional and national levels.

31. Post-conflict situations raise certain special issues. International assistance is needed to support post-conflict activities such as de-mining of agricultural lands and transportation routes in order to quickly re-establish income-earning activities as well as quick-impact micro-projects that provide training and other capacity-building activities that would facilitate the reintegration of ex-combatants, refugees and displaced persons within their communities. In the medium to long term, the international community needs to provide assistance for the repair of the legal and institutional framework to promote the post-conflict stability necessary for the return of domestic and international investment.

32. These development activities require close coordination between national and international organizations involved in development and those involved in

emergency management and/or post-conflict reconciliation. The Economic and Social Council may wish to consider how this objective can best be advanced.

D. Capacity-building

33. Capacity-building is an essential component and a means for attaining sustainable development. African countries need capacity: state-of-the-art technology, a strong human resource base and properly functioning institutions in both the public and private sectors, as well as in civil society as a whole.

34. Capacity-building consists not just in providing people with skills and know-how; it also entails providing the environment in which people can exercise their capacities; empowerment of the beneficiaries of the technical cooperation; and effective management and capacity utilization.

35. In the pursuit of national policies and strategies, attention needs to be given by African Governments to:

(a) Focusing special efforts on institution-building and public administration, in particular by developing a merit-based civil service with appropriate checks and balances, improved conditions of service, increased access to education and training for civil servants, and police;

(b) Promoting and strengthening civic education for all citizens, in particular youth, in order to raise understanding of their rights and responsibilities;

(c) Providing an enabling framework for effective participation of non-governmental organizations in development;

(d) Enhancing their access to information technology.

36. As stated earlier, capacity-building is one of the major themes of the Secretary-General's initiative on Africa within the context of ACC. The international community should assist the overall efforts of African countries by providing the requisite expertise and resources to enable them to implement their national policies.

37. The Economic and Social Council's consideration of the subject could serve to give further impetus to these efforts.

E. South-South cooperation

38. The experiences of developing countries in other regions are of relevance to African development and suggest that South-South cooperation has great potential. Cooperation within the region itself is especially important. The scope of South-South cooperation covers areas such as transfer of technology and know-how, the provision of advisory services, training, joint ventures, trade and investment, agricultural and fishery development, education and research, and poverty reduction.

39. To benefit fully from cooperation, African countries should intensify consultations with other developing countries, particularly from within the region, and establish the necessary governmental institution setting to coordinate and strengthen South-South exchanges, and to build on achievements already realized through technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC). Two other initiatives are notable. First, the highly successful Tokyo International Conference on African Development in October 1993 and the series of follow-up meetings, most recently in Bandung, Indonesia, in December 1994, have brought together countries of Asia and Africa. Second, steps are being taken to bring together African and Latin American countries in an African-Latin American institute. Two constructive meetings have already been held - in Montevideo and Windhoek - in this regard.

40. Advanced developing countries, from within the region and including the newly industrialized countries, should pay special attention to African needs for South-South cooperation. They should undertake initiatives for consultations, business tours in Africa, trade fairs, exchange of information, and the establishment of a network for exchange of experiences. Given the diversity of development levels within Africa, the potential for intraregional cooperation and assistance also needs to be tapped.

41. The United Nations system should intensify its South-South cooperation activities with African countries. To that effect, funding organizations and international financial institutions should allocate more resources to these activities, placing themselves as a third party within triangular arrangements. Specific programmes for this purpose in the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UNCTAD and the Department for Development Support and Management Services of the United Nations Secretariat should be strengthened. ECA and the other regional commissions should cooperate in developing joint programmes for this purpose.

42. Donor countries and the private sector should enhance their support for South-South cooperation with Africa by providing the necessary resources, information, know-how and technology transfer through their support for multilateral initiatives, as well as bilaterally or through triangular arrangements.

III. CONCLUDING REMARKS

43. In 1991, African countries and the international community adopted a political framework with clear objectives for Africa's development. Today, Africa is still going through a twin transition, political and economic, guided by the principles of self-reliance and self-sustaining development. Consistent with these principles, and beyond humanitarian assistance, Africa needs significant and sustained support from the international community for the development of its immense natural and human resources. A firm determination is required by all parties to consolidate the gains made to date under the New Agenda and to renew political commitments for its successful implementation.

44. A change in the perception of Africa's development potential is necessary. Africa's need for external assistance goes well beyond the region's emergency

needs. Investing for the future in the development of skills and infrastructure is most critical. This implies an enhanced social base and a significant increase in per capita incomes, thus setting the basis for an effective partnership in trade and expansion of the global economy.

PART TWO: THE CURRENT STAGE OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS NEW AGENDA FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AFRICA IN THE 1990s (UN-NADAF)

I. INTRODUCTION

45. The New Agenda reflects mutually reinforcing responsibilities and commitments by African countries and their development partners with regard to implementing concrete actions needed to bring Africa from crisis to recovery and to lay the basis for sustainable development. Its assessment should focus on the extent to which its objectives have been translated into concrete actions by all parties concerned.

46. This assessment draws on many studies and evaluations including those done by ECA, UNDP, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), UNCTAD, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Bank.

II. OVERVIEW OF EFFORTS BY AFRICAN COUNTRIES

47. Although the overall social and economic situation of Africa is unsatisfactory, this is not because the countries of the region have not battled, individually and collectively, to find their way out of the crisis confronting them. Many African countries are implementing economic and social reforms, improving governance and economic management, creating an enabling environment for the mobilization of investment resources, domestic and external, and integrating population factors into the development processes so as to contain the stress of rapid population growth and prevent the degradation of the environment.

48. The continuing conflicts in some countries should not obscure the gains that a number of African countries have made with respect to increased freedom of expression and association, a clear relaxation of restrictions on political activities and increased respect for human rights.

49. In a recent survey conducted by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Development Centre, Africa's military spending was found to have decreased. Contrary to the common perception, the share of sub-Saharan Africa in world military spending amounted to only 1.5 per cent over the past 20 years.

50. A large number of countries have initiated structural reforms, accompanied by a change in the nature of State intervention in the economy, and by shrinking budget deficits. It is encouraging to note that in 1994, eight African countries achieved or exceeded the 6 per cent annual GDP growth target set under the New Agenda. GDP grew steadily in some countries, particularly those that had created an enabling environment to stimulate private sector development, with significant gains in the agricultural and industrial sectors. In spite of the unfavourable external environment, some countries, especially in the northern, eastern and southern Africa subregions, succeeded in reversing the

trend of de-industrialization or in rehabilitating their industrial infrastructures.

51. In the area of human development and capacity-building, several African countries have taken initiatives to reverse the trend in the deterioration of their national education and training systems and, to some extent, the rehabilitation of social infrastructures. As budgetary constraints did not permit most Governments to increase public expenditures in the social sector, many countries relied on non-governmental organizations to supply social facilities in the rural areas, and pushed for the expansion of the role of the private sector in education and training. In some of the African least developed countries, where rates of illiteracy remain the highest in the world, Governments have initiated the implementation of ambitious literacy campaigns, especially in the rural areas.

52. African decision makers have become increasingly aware of the importance of population issues in bringing sustainability to the development process. In 1992, at the Third African Population Conference held in Dakar, African Governments adopted the Dakar/Ngor Declaration on Population, Family and Sustainable Development (E/CONF.84/PC/13, annex II), which advocated, inter alia, the integration of population policies and programmes into development strategies, focusing on strengthening social sectors with a view to influencing human development and working towards reducing the national population growth rate from 3.0 per cent to, on average, 2.5 per cent by the year 2000 and 2.0 per cent by year 2010. To date, at least 38 African countries have adopted or are formulating an official national population policy; 30 countries have incorporated population factors into their "full" development plans or structural adjustment "rolling" plans. In about 10 African countries, observers already foresee the beginning of "demographic transition".

53. Several countries experienced significant advances in female literacy and education. The adoption of the African Framework of Action by the Fourth Meeting of the African Intergovernmental Preparatory Committee for the World Conference on Women is an important step towards realizing the potential contribution of women in African development.

III. MAJOR INITIATIVES AT THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL, INCLUDING BY THE UNITED NATIONS

54. The New Agenda calls on the international community to search for lasting solutions to critical issues that impede Africa's economic recovery, such as external debt, commodity prices and financial resources, in terms of volume and efficiency. The international community is also expected to support the efforts made by African countries in building domestic capacities, diversifying their economies, and forging regional cooperation and integration. The New Agenda calls upon the United Nations system to play a major role in implementation, and asks the various organizations of the system to devise specific programmes for Africa consistent with the elements of the New Agenda and to devote adequate resources for their implementation. The New Agenda entrusts the Secretary-General with the overall leadership, global coordination and mobilization of the international community for the purpose of its implementation.

55. In this connection, a number of initiatives were taken by the Secretary-General. At the institutional level, these included the establishment of the Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries within the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development of the United Nations Secretariat which responds to the need to have at the centre of the policy-making processes, a catalyst and visible focal point devoted to Africa; the Africa Recovery Unit within the Department of Public Information of the United Nations Secretariat tasked with effecting global awareness of the African socio-economic situation; and the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on African Economic Recovery and Development (UN-IATF), chaired and serviced by ECA, which facilitates consultations and cooperation among United Nations system organizations and the specialized agencies and provides the necessary support for follow-up and monitoring of the implementation of the New Agenda.

56. At the end of 1992, the Secretary-General established the Panel of High-level Personalities on African Development to advise and assist him on African development, particularly on the implementation of UN-NADAF. The conclusions and recommendations reached by the Panel in its first four meetings are contained in a publication to be made available to Member States at the substantive session of 1995 of the Economic and Social Council and at the fiftieth session of the General Assembly.

57. Concern at the lack of progress in improving the lives of the majority of Africans and the need to focus higher-level attention on Africa led the Secretary-General to propose a Special Initiative for Africa within the United Nations system. A steering committee of ACC has been formed to consider more concrete and practical projects that can have an impact on development in Africa in the short-to-medium term. It will present its proposals to ACC in October 1995.

58. The Secretary-General has repeatedly drawn attention to the importance of relieving the debt burden, particularly of low-income African countries.

59. The United Nations system plays a catalytic role in international initiatives to tackle key issues such as human resources development, food security, basic human health, the formulation of population and development policies, infrastructure and production development. In its efforts to mobilize the support of the international community for UN-NADAF, the United Nations worked closely with the Government of Japan and the Global Coalition for Africa (GCA) for the organization and the convening, in October 1993, of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development.

60. The United Nations system has continued to promote international commitments and their fulfilment so as to meet specific African needs, not only under UN-NADAF, but also under the Second Transport and Communications Decade in Africa (1991-2000) (UNTACDA II); the Second Industrial Development Decade for Africa (1991-2000) (IDDA II); Agenda 21, 7/ adopted by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development; the International Conference on Population and Development; and more recent commitments in the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development 8/ and Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development. 9/ Besides these longer-term programmes of action, the

United Nations system has played and continues to play a vital role in peace-keeping operations and in emergency situations in Africa.

61. In responding to a recommendation of the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC), a System-wide Plan of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development was elaborated in 1992, with a view to further harmonizing and coordinating the contribution of various organizations and the specialized agencies, and to optimizing the use of resources. Not only does the Plan reflect the objectives of the New Agenda, but it also integrates Africa's own regional strategies and other major global action programmes, including the Abuja Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community. The Plan was built on six priority areas: human resources development and capacity-building; the development of food, agriculture and agro-industries; the diversification of African economies; the promotion of growth, equity and sustainable development; the mobilization of external and domestic resources; and the strengthening of regional cooperation and integration. A major innovation in the revised version of the Plan, completed in 1994, was the inclusion of the concept of lead, associate lead and collaborative agencies for each of the priority areas.

62. In order to promote human development, the United Nations system has pursued programmes and projects aimed at basic education, development of skills, employment promotion. primary health care, the reduction, through immunization, of diseases, increased provision of family planning information services and the control of human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS). It has also devised programmes for the improvement of management, modernization of public administration and increased efficiency of financial intermediation institutions. To achieve a balance among population, production, environment and social welfare, the specialized agencies, in collaborative efforts led by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), augmented their efforts in sensitizing decision makers and households regarding the interrelationships among these important development factors.

63. The United Nations system carried out a number of activities aimed at tackling the African crisis in its environmental dimension. In this respect, the system has been instrumental in the mobilization of resources for African national and regional environment protection programmes. Besides its contribution to the establishment of the Global Environment Facility which has provided financial resources to tackle environment problems, especially in the area of biodiversity, the system successfully conducted the negotiations for the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.

64. The development of the private sector has been a major area of focus of the work of the United Nations system within the framework of the New Agenda. Several organizations devised programmes aimed at building an appropriate business environment, including the strengthening of entrepreneurial capacities and the development of support infrastructures for industries, transports and communications. The United Nations system has also emphasized trade promotion and diversification within the context of private sector development. The system has undertaken activities geared to trade expansion and investment promotion.

65. The United Nations system took particular interest in the participation of non-governmental organizations in African development, organizing workshops and enhancing cooperation with them. Following a recommendation of the Secretary-General's Panel of High-Level Personalities which devoted its second meeting in 1993 to the consideration of cooperation with non-governmental organizations for African development, a high-level brainstorming workshop including representatives of the non-governmental organization community, Governments and the United Nations system was held in early 1995 on a number of issues relative to the contribution of non-governmental organizations. The brainstorming workshop recommended, inter alia, the convening of an international conference on non-governmental organizations and African development as a follow-up to the International Conference on Popular Participation held in Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania, in 1990.

66. The United Nations system has played a significant role in strengthening regional cooperation and integration in Africa. In particular, besides direct technical and financial assistance given to a number of regional and subregional institutions, the system provided valuable assistance to OAU in the preparation of protocols to the Abuja Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community.

67. The United Nations, the Governments of Japan and Indonesia, and the Global Coalition for Africa co-organized in 1994 the Asia-Africa Forum with a view to facilitating the exchange of experiences in various areas between African countries and the more advanced developing countries from East and South-East Asia. The Forum culminated in the adoption of the Bandung Framework for Asia-Africa Cooperation: Working Together towards the Twenty-first Century (TCDC/9/3/Add.1, annex, appendix).

68. Within the framework of the New Agenda, the United Nations established, in its medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997, programme 45, 10/ in support of the implementation of UN-NADAF. The Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries, ECA and the Africa Recovery Unit were assigned the responsibilities for, respectively, resource mobilization, follow-up and monitoring, and creation of global awareness.

69. It should be recalled that the adoption of the New Agenda was accompanied by the operationalization by the international donor community of the Special Programme for Africa, led by the World Bank, to support adjustment and reform, and the establishment of the Global Coalition for Africa in 1991 to conduct policy dialogue between Africa and its partners. The regional dimension of development, which is a major element in the New Agenda, has also been supported by a core of donors who view economic integration in Africa as an element of sustainability in the longer term. In support of the process initiated by African countries, several initiatives aiming at strengthening integration institutions have been taken by some of Africa's partners, especially in the Sahel, and eastern and southern Africa.

70. The international community has also considered the need for diversifying African economies, in terms both of lessening African countries' losses owing to falling commodity prices and of supporting their diversification projects and programmes. In this regard, the General Assembly, in its resolution 49/142, recommended the improvement of the existing compensatory mechanisms, the

expansion of the opportunities offered by the Common Fund for Commodities and the establishment of a special contribution to finance the preparatory phase of commodity diversification projects and programmes.

71. Africa's stock of external debt remains disquieting. Some encouraging initiatives have been proposed to reduce that burden. A number of bilateral creditor countries have responded positively to the call for debt relief, especially for highly indebted least developed African countries. The initiative, taken in 1992 by Canada, Denmark, England, France, Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden, to cancel as much as $15.1 billion of ODA debt owed by least developed countries, equivalent to 14 per cent of total concessional bilateral debt, benefited mostly the low-income African countries. The United States of America announced its willingness to write off up to half of the debt owed to it by the poorest, International Development Association (IDA)-eligible African countries. Equally important is the recent forgiveness by France, in January 1994, of an important share of the stock of the public debt of the 14 countries of the Communauté financière africaine (CFA) franc zone, within the context of the CFA franc devaluation. While there has been no significant rescheduling of multilateral debt owed to the international financial institutions, the Debt-reduction Facility is a positive step in this direction. One of the most striking features of the recent debt relief initiatives is that many restructuring strategies have offered a conversion clause, giving ample room to debt-for-development swaps.

72. While UN-NADAF has acknowledged the necessity of further strengthening regional cooperation and integration, the process needs to be sustained by the implementation of regional strategies. The main rationale for the implementation of the Abuja Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community was that major prerequisites, including social stability, sustained economic development and social progress, could not be achieved by individual countries in isolation. Major obstacles to regional cooperation and integration are the paucity or lack of financial resources to support the process.

IV. MAJOR AREAS NEEDING ATTENTION

73. Africa is faced with a range of complex, interrelated issues and challenges that have made its development a formidable challenge. The problems of Africa are further compounded by the present international economic and political backdrop. The previous sections have listed some of the steps that have been taken. The sections that follow list some of the most serious obstacles to the implementation of UN-NADAF.

A. The external environment

74. While the international economic environment confronting African countries is largely adverse, the capacities of different regions and countries within Africa to respond vary greatly and are closely linked to levels of development and a mix of historical, political and geographical factors. The most serious external constraints on African development relate to its crushing debt burden, the decline in concessional assistance, the new situation after the Uruguay

Round Agreements, minimal FDI flows to Africa and the fact that the full potential of South-South cooperation has not been realized.

1. Development assistance

75. The magnitude of external financial resource requirements for Africa's development have been estimated by the World Bank, the African Development Bank and ECA to be about $60 billion per year.

76. Aggregate net resource flows (loan disbursement - loan amortization + official grants + foreign direct investment) to Africa have declined in the 1990s. The flow dropped in current prices from $22.9 billion in 1990 to $21.7 billion in 1993.

77. Official development finance, which consists of bilateral and multilateral loans and grants, is a major component of the flows. These flows declined from $21.5 billion in 1990 to $19.7 billion in 1993. Foreign direct investment flows to Africa have increased only slightly, although the share in the developing countries total has declined.

78. As the majority of African countries are still dependent on concessional aid for the implementation of their development programmes, the quality of such aid has been a major determinant of its overall impact. In this regard, it is widely acknowledged that the bulk of ODA to Africa is still directed towards donor-driven programmes, and implemented in a fragmented manner without a focus on common agreed targets and without taking into consideration the priority of the recipient country. Also, the high overhead costs of technical assistance, estimated at 25 per cent of total concessional aid, support the argument that such aid could have contributed more effectively to the development of capacities in Africa.

2. Debt

79. In value terms, Africa's total debt stock was projected to increase from $297 billion in 1993 to $313 billion in 1994. This amount represents 234.4 per cent export income for Africa and 254.5 per cent for sub-Saharan Africa. These ratios are high compared with the World Bank's indicator of debt sustainability, which is the net present value of debt-to-export income ratio of 200 per cent, depending on the level of external flows and the availability of concessional finance. Of total debt stock in 1994, 40.6 per cent was bilateral debt; 21 per cent multilateral debt; and 19.5 per cent private debt.

80. Some progress has recently been made on official bilateral debt. The new Naples terms agreed to by the Paris Club in December 1994 are an improvement over the Toronto terms, the Enhanced Toronto terms and the Trinidad terms, as the percentage of debt forgiveness can be increased from 50 to 67 per cent for those countries whose per capita income is less than $500, with a debt-to-export ratio that exceeds 350 per cent, and which are in compliance with IMF and Paris Club agreements. However, as a programme of debt relief, their usefulness remains limited unless it is applied to a sizeable part of outstanding debt and

debt stock reduction extended to a larger number of countries. Progress on bilateral debt also has to be complemented by action by other official creditors, measures to alleviate multilateral debt burden and support for commercial debt reduction.

81. Several options have been proposed for the reduction of multilateral debt, including (a) a special drawings rights (SDRs) emission to reduce multilateral debt stocks; (b) the conversion of a portion of multilateral debt stock to equity investments, including debt-for-environment and debt-for-human resource development swaps; (c) the expansion of concessional resources for multilateral development banks; (d) the establishment of special funds, with the assistance of bilateral donors, to assist multilateral debt relief; and (e) the increase in Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility (ESAF) and IDA funds under concessional terms.

82. The options for the reduction of commercial debt have been limited so far for low-income countries. The World Bank Debt-reduction Facility for IDA members is one option that has been utilized so far by five African countries (by September 1994) to reduce their principal. The Facility has been used to buy back commercial debt at sharp discounts ranging from 10 to 18 cents per dollar. The Facility should be enhanced and expertise provided to other countries that would like to utilize its resources and there should be additional multilateral and bilateral support for commercial debt reduction, including debt-for-development swaps.

3. Trade

83. On the export front, African economies continued to be characterized by low diversification and heavy reliance on a few commodities. Africa's share of world markets has declined steadily since 1980 and it now accounts for 2.4 per cent of world merchandise trade. As a result, the region has become marginalized in the global economy. The fragile production structures of African countries and the instability of commodity markets did not allow for an increase in exports which totalled only $89.6 billion in 1994. With their prices increasing more than their volume, imports amounted to $97.8 billion in 1994, thereby worsening the current amount deficit, which had reached $10.5 billion, as against $7.8 billion in 1993 and $6.2 billion in 1992. About one third of Africa's export earnings is used for debt servicing, crippling the ability of African countries to finance the imports of much-needed food for achieving food security, machinery and other goods for attaining sustained growth.

84. Although the diversity of African countries suggests that the Uruguay Round Agreements will have an uneven impact at the country level, most assessments generally concur that African countries, in particular the African least developed countries, will, on balance, face difficulties in adapting to new market access conditions. It is estimated that the continent could lose up to $2.6 billion per annum during the initial years of implementation of the Agreements. By contrast, global trade is estimated to be approximately $500 billion higher per annum. In the short-to-medium term, the Uruguay Round

Agreements will have a significant impact on market access and on import costs for net food importing countries.

85. Under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) and the Lomé Convention, most African countries enjoyed duty-free access or faced tariff rates between zero and 5 per cent in their major export markets. Under the Uruguay Round Agreements, they subscribed to trade liberalization with the result that they may face further reduction of most favoured nation (MFN) tariffs for the products that benefited from preferential access, resulting in an inevitable loss of margin of preference and a possible loss of competitiveness.

86. It has become evident from the analysis of the new market access conditions resulting from the Uruguay Round that erosion of preferences has actually taken place and is most significant in the case of tropical products followed by natural resource-based products. On a trade-weighted basis, the average overall loss for these two product sectors is 50 per cent and 60 per cent in GSP margin respectively in the three major markets of the European Union, Japan and the United States. In the case of African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) States margins, the loss is somewhat less - 30 per cent and 16 per cent reflecting a comparatively lower overall average percentage cut in MFN tariffs by the European Union in the products of interest to African countries in these sectors. The overall averages, however, mask significant differences in individual products in which the erosion of preferential margins could be as high as 100 per cent, for example, coffee and cocoa beans in the case of ACP margins under the preferential access provided for in the Lomé Convention.

87. The relatively greater concern on the part of African countries for the losses incurred in respect of preferential tariff margins is explained by their high dependence on exports of tropical and agricultural products, which account for a significant share of their export trade. The share of seven categories (which formed the basis of the negotiations on market access liberalization in this sector) of tropical products in total merchandise exports ranges from 50 per cent to 100 per cent for the majority of these countries. Erosion of preferential margins, which offer them a competitive edge in the market, has a greater impact on their overall export earnings owing to their narrow export base, thus limiting their gains in improved access in other categories of products.

88. The impact of the reform programme envisaged in the Agreement on Agriculture would seem to be of much greater concern to African countries as the great majority of them are both net food importing and least developed. A reduction or elimination of agricultural support and protection in the industrialized countries could have a dynamic impact on the development of agricultural production in African countries, and could provide the latter with an opportunity to expand their foreign exchange earnings from their agricultural exports in the longer run.

89. In the short-to-medium term, because of reduced production in developed countries and lags in expanding agricultural production in developing countries, world food prices can be expected to rise. For the vast majority of African least developed countries that are net food importers, this would represent a severe strain. While the reduction of agricultural protection and support

measures in the developed countries implies opportunities for expansion in food production in importing countries, the long-term gains from exploiting such benefits are likely to be overshadowed by short-term nutritional and balance-of-payments implications of rising world food prices. In recognition of the special circumstances of the net food importing countries, the Final Act Embodying the Results of the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations 11/ stressed the important role of food aid in grant form, in addition to other measures including financial assistance in the transitional costs incurred through their efforts. The critical question is how to translate these commitments into concrete measures of assistance.

90. Other parts of the agreements reached in the Uruguay Round like the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) and the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights, including Trade in Counterfeit Goods (TRIPs) will also require adjustments in policy reforms.

4. Foreign direct investment

91. Compared with the other continents, FDI flows to Africa have been minimal. In addition, FDI flows have not been sensitive to the balance-of-payments needs of African countries. With the ongoing political and economic reform measures taking place in about 37 countries, there is a possibility for attracting flows from other continents. In this respect, support from the international community is required to galvanize new flows to this largely untapped continent.

92. FDI flows to Africa have remained largely unchanged in absolute terms and have even decreased as a proportion of the developing countries' total FDI. They fell from 10 per cent in 1987-1991 to about 5 per cent in 1992-1994. With an estimated FDI stock of $48 billion in 1993, Africa is the developing region that has received least attention. This can be explained by both exogenous and endogenous factors. The former include the poor outlook for prices of African commodity exports and increased competition from other regions; the latter consist of uncertainty regarding commitment to adjustment programmes, high levels of external debt, lack of an enabling environment, instability and insecurity and other conditions that limit short-term growth prospects.

93. Over three quarters of the investment flows were directed towards oil-exporting countries, although the share of non-oil-producing countries has increased in recent years. Despite the presence of rich natural resources, the continent's slow economic growth, which remains well below the average for all developing countries, offsets even this considerable advantage. Hence, despite continued efforts to liberalize the regulatory framework for FDI and the introduction of a centralized investment centre in several countries, Africa has not succeeded in attracting sizeable investment flows.

94. FDI in natural resources continues to be important for many countries in sub-Saharan Africa. There is considerable potential for investment in oil exploration in sub-Saharan Africa. To exploit that potential, several countries are offering more favourable contract terms to oil companies than in the past. Foreign investors view investments in petroleum exploration and development as part of their strategy of global expansion in the face of the growing demand for

petroleum and oil products in Africa and other countries. Some countries have also encouraged FDI in the services sector with positive results.

95. The 53 African countries reveal a complex diversity of economic performance and of factors determining FDI flows. Disparities exist in terms of market size and growth, natural resource endowments, entrepreneurial and institutional capabilities, social and economic infrastructure, political stability and economic policies. This heterogeneity inevitably leads to differences in FDI performance and potential. There is a large unexploited investment potential in many countries. Foreign investors should not treat Africa as a whole as an inhospitable location for FDI and ignore potential opportunities.

96. An interregional comparison of profitability of FDI in Africa by United States foreign affiliates demonstrates that investment in Africa can be highly profitable. In 1992, net income as a share of owner's equity in Africa was 24 per cent, while that of United States affiliates in Latin America and the Caribbean was 11 per cent. The figure is also higher than that in most developed country regions (11 per cent for all developed countries). Most of the profits of these affiliates have been generated in the primary sector.

5. South-South cooperation

97. Although African countries already benefit from a wide range of South-South cooperation activities including the transfer of technology and know-how, the provision of advisory services, training, joint ventures, trade and investments, most of them are ill prepared for such cooperation. Moreover, in African countries, such important partners as the private sector whose role is vital for sustainable development have not yet been actively involved in South-South cooperation. Some major donor countries, such as Japan, have called for increased emphasis on South-South cooperation, its inclusion as a central element in the proposed agenda for development and the convening of a United Nations conference on South-South cooperation (General Assembly resolution 49/96).

98. Substantive areas for promoting the exchange of experiences and expertise among African and Asian countries were identified at the Asia-Africa Forum held in Bandung in December 1994. Activities developed in these areas could have a catalytic effect and help put South-South cooperation on a more secure path for the future. South-South cooperation should be developed on the basis of a strategy that places emphasis on strengthening the capacity of African countries to manage their development process. In this respect, African countries need specific structures, not just focal points, that would enable them to provide leadership for, and effectively catalyse, South-South activities.

99. The private sector and the non-governmental organizations should be called upon, alongside Governments, to initiate and sustain South-South cooperation, especially in the area of investment flows. Indeed the private sector in the South could significantly assist African countries in know-how and technology transfer.

100. Within the United Nations system, several organizational entities are devoted to South-South Cooperation. UNDP is involved, both independently and in conjunction with other international institutions, in carrving out a varied programme of activities to promote and support technical cooperation among African countries (TCAC) and technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC). This support, catalytic or supplementary, has concentrated on the mobilization of skilled manpower. It aims at making available competitive and cost-effective expertise to private and public sector enterprises and institutions. The Special Unit for TCDC of UNDP has extensive experience in the field of technical cooperation in Africa with activities such as capacities and needs matching (CNM), subject-specific workshops focusing on interactive exchange and consultations designed for sharing experiences and know-how, and development of an information referral system (INRES), a data bank on developing countries' institutional capacities accessible to all potential users. This support has generated additional resources and replication of know-how and technology; indeed, capacities and needs matchings have not only stimulated follow-up investment but also served to strengthen negotiations and project formulation skills of the participating countries.

101. For its part, ECA has been assisting African subregional groupings (the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Preferential Trade Area for Eastern and Southern African States (PTA), and so forth) in their efforts towards achieving harmonization and trade liberalization among themselves, supplemented by sectoral programmes in agriculture, infrastructure, transport, communications and monetary harmonization. It has also been implementing subregional systems of self-financing aimed at reducing the dependence of integration processes on external financing.

102. Other institutions including the UNCTAD Division for Economic Cooperation among Developing Countries (ECDC) and FAO have provided technical assistance and advisory services to a large number of African integration and cooperation groupings such as ECOWAS and PTA on a whole range of South-South issues relating to trade and food issues. UNCTAD has also been instrumental in organizing business missions, meetings and seminars for African enterprises with a view to promoting cooperation among them and between such enterprises and African Governments. These initiatives have contributed to a continuous expansion of South-South trade, particularly in the last few years.

103. Non-governmental organizations and PVOs (private voluntary organizations) have become effective instruments of development through a wide range of activities, including the provision of technical assistance and training, the preparation of special studies and reports, the organization of workshops, conferences and seminars on development technologies, key development issues and needs, field-oriented operations research, and information exchange and dissemination. They could make a substantial contribution to South-South cooperation with African countries through networking and triangular arrangements involving other non-governmental organizations, non-governmental organization associations, PVOs, universities, development agencies and recipient Governments.

B. Internal factors

104. A variety of internal factors underlie the actual performance of African economies. There are large variations among countries in the region, both in potential and in performance. The constraints posed by two more specific factors, common to many but not all countries, are described below.

1. The persistence of crisis

105. Drought has been a continued threat in Africa since the late 1960s. In fact, the general consensus is that a long-term climatic change has taken place, affecting particularly the Sahelian region, the Horn of Africa and southern Africa. However, droughts do not necessarily result in famine. Famine reflects underlying structural causes, including deforestation and soil degradation, water table depletion, lack of land-use policies, and poor communication and transport facilities, exacerbated by demographic, institutional and political failures and chronic poverty. These structural deficiencies compromise the ability of countries to cope with natural disasters and, at the same time, make them vulnerable to disasters. In fact, UNDP notes that while the number of disasters was higher in the Americas between 1967 and 1991 (22 per cent in the Americas compared with 15 per cent in Africa), 60 per cent of the deaths were in Africa.

106. In the recent past, political conflict and civil wars have also led to a dramatic increase in the incidence of famine and massive movements of refugees. Currently, there are approximately 16 million refugees and internally displaced persons. These conflicts have, at their base, the perception of inequity in the distribution of resources among different groups.

107. The catalyst for the new focus on crisis management and prevention is the recognition that the upsurge in the number of crises facing Africa is displacing attention from development activities. These crises have resulted in what has been described as "permanent emergencies", and have left the international community with an image of Africa as being in perpetual crisis. The diversion of scarce resources, the destruction of productive assets and other dislocations associated with these emergencies can make future development efforts more difficult. Given the existing high level of absolute poverty in Africa, which it has been estimated will reach 50 per cent of the population in the year 2000, any reduction in development activities could only result in the further impoverishment of the majority of people and exacerbate the breakdown of political and social order. This has fuelled concern about the need for strengthening capacity for crisis prevention and management, in the interest not only of saving lives, but also of maximizing efficiency in the utilization of aid funds for emergencies as well as development.

108. Emergencies and peace-keeping operations are absorbing a significant proportion of resources that could otherwise be used for development. For example, the United States spent $1.6 billion on Somalia between December 1992 and November 1994, an amount equal to two years of development of sub-Saharan Africa. Other traditional donor nations have also increased such expenditures manifold. Within the United Nations system, emergency relief budgets and peace-

keeping budgets have increased dramatically. For example, the United Nations has spent roughly $5.7 billion on peace-keeping activities in Africa since 1991. Even at the national level, domestic expenditures on these crises are high. Southern African countries spent a significant portion of their GDP for drought relief efforts in 1991-1992.

109. Food security is defined by FAO as "ensuring that all people at all times have both physical and economic access to the basic food they need". In Africa, the outlook for food security is pessimistic. Although both agricultural production and food production have increased over the past two decades, neither has kept pace with population growth. As a result, per capita food production is declining and 32 countries are identified as having low or critically low household food security as measured by FAO's Aggregate Household Food Security Index (AHFSI). FAO anticipates that chronic undernutrition and hunger will affect 300 million (or 32 per cent of the population) in 2010, as compared with approximately 180 million currently.

110. The General Assembly, in its resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991, noted the importance of early warning in preparedness programmes for both natural and man-made disasters and called for the systematic pooling, analysis and dissemination of early-warning information (annex, para. 19). Early-warning information allows the international community time for early response, that is, for developing preventive actions or making contingency plans to manage potential crises rather than react after the crisis has occurred.

111. The purpose of early-warning systems, within the context of food security, is to develop operational food information systems that would incorporate crop forecasting, market information and household food security assessment, so as to provide advance notice of potential famines or problems of food supply. Such systems already exist at a subregional level, for example, through CILSS, SADC and the Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development, and feed into a hierarchy of information systems such as FAO's Global Information and Early Warning System.

112. The Humanitarian Early Warning System (HEWS), developed in the Department of Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat monitors critical indicators, covering socio-economic data and other fundamental data, as well as trends and events in order to facilitate vulnerability assessment and identify potential crises.

2. Institutional capacity

113. Within the context of political organization and public administration, UN-NADAF recognized and gave prominence to the intensification of the democratization process, full participation of the people in the development process, the commitment to human rights, gender equality, attention to the needs of children, and the role of African non-governmental organizations. These are some elements in the creation of an effective system of governance through institutional capacity-building.

114. The importance of governance through a participatory, transparent and accountable administration is underscored in the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development adopted in March 1995. Member States declare that they are convinced that democracy and transparent and accountable governance and administration in all sectors of society are indispensable foundations for the realization of social and people-centred sustainable development (para. 4). African countries have committed themselves to political and economic reforms as reflected in the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s adopted in 1991, the Tokyo Declaration adopted in October 1993 at the Tokyo International Conference on African Development, and the Cairo Agenda for Action of the Council of Ministers of OAU in March 1995. They recognize that democratization, respect for human rights, rule of law, transparency and accountability are essential in creating an enabling environment for development.

115. UNDP has undertaken work on elaborating a framework for "capacity assessment" and six studies have been done using this framework. It has been found that countries do not have the same problems and therefore a range of options is necessary to improve governance.

116. A useful framework for self-assessment has also been devised by the Global Coalition for Africa and is being tested in the field. The framework identifies the major categories of governance within the context of economic development such as predictability and rule of law, openness and information, accountability and transparency. These categories are further specified to include constitutional provisions and human rights predictability; rule of law; accountability and transparency; administrative and bureaucratic consistency; political openness and tolerance; participation and communication; and a favourable environment for private sector activity. The framework's categories and components can be evaluated by means of a check-list established for each component so as to gauge progress towards improved governance. Evaluations are then performed and recommendations for improvements are formulated in consultation with community organizations.

117. Public sector reform has been furthered through structural adjustment programmes that require the restructuring of the public enterprises (including new systems of accounting, quality control, marketing, price and productivity incentives), retrenchment, cost containment, and salary enhancement. In practice, salary enhancement has been underemphasized and greater stress placed on retrenchment with the result that the number of public employees have declined with no evidence of improved performance in most countries.

118. The interrelationships of institutional, infrastructural, and human resources in capacity-building are well illustrated in the case of the development of science and technology. They rest upon a knowledge base that must be assembled through research conducted by organizations and professionals and imparted through programmes of education and training.

119. The 1979 Vienna Programme of Action on Science and Technology for Development 12/ proposed strengthening of the endogenous capacity of developing countries in science and technology development; restructuring of international scientific and technological relations; and strengthening of the role of the

United Nations system, including provision of additional resources to support developing countries. The 1989 end-of-decade review found that the gap had widened significantly and a later evaluation of United Nations support for science and technology in Africa found that few of the projects described as "institution-building" assigned importance to design or actual implementation; moreover, they made little or no adjustment to the sociocultural milieu, and ignored available science and technology capabilities or level of development in the country or region concerned.

120. Capacity-building, in its widest sense, will remain the basis of sustained growth. The differences in the institutional capacities in the different countries in Africa accounts, in some measure, for the disparate development experiences of countries in Africa. A much greater focus is required on the institutional capacity-building dimension for the development of countries in Africa.

Notes

1/ See A/S-11/14, annex I.

2/ A/40/666, annex I, declaration AHG/Decl.1 (XXI), annex.

3/ A/44/315, annex.

4/ A/46/651, annex.

5/ General Assembly resolution S-13/2, annex.

6/ World Economic and Social Survey, 1995 (E/1995/50), box VII.2, entitled "It is time for a green revolution in Africa", analyses and makes policy recommendations on food production in Africa. It attributes the decline in food production to a lack of seeds suitable to African conditions, weak local research capacity and a poorly developed support system to encourage adoption. Additional research specifically designed for application to African conditions is urgently needed and new funds for such research could be raised from the revenue potential of the property rights of germplasm collections that were recently placed under the auspices of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) (see annex).

7/ Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992, vol. I, Resolutions Adopted by the Conference (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex II.

8/ Report of the World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen, 6-12 March 1995 (A/CONF.166/9), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

9/ Ibid., annex II.

10/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 6 (A/47/6/Rev.1), vol. I.

11/ Legal Instruments Embodying the Results of the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations, done at Marrakesh on 15 April 1994, vol. I.

12/ Report of the United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development, Vienna, 20-31 August 1971 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.79.I.21 and corrigenda), chap. VII.

Annex*

IT IS TIME FOR A GREEN REVOLUTION IN AFRICA

1. Food production per person in Africa has been declining since the early 1970s. While Asia and Latin America have seen large gains in the production of rice and wheat since the mid-1960s as a result of the increased use of new high-yield varieties, Africa has hardly benefited from the Green Revolution. "This can be largely attributed to a lack of seeds suitable to African conditions, weak local research capacity and a poorly developed support system to encourage adoption. Additional research specifically designed for application to African conditions is urgently needed and new funds for such research could be raised from the revenue potential of the property rights of germplasm collections that were recently placed under the auspices of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)".

Lack of suitable improved seeds

2. The green revolution in Asia was made possible by the development of high-yielding varieties of wheat and rice that responded very well to fertilizers and controlled water management. These varieties are, however, not very suitable for conditions in Africa, namely, its climate (for example, variability of rain), soil and plant diseases. While about 5 per cent of total arable land is currently irrigated in Africa - compared with one third in Asia - the potential for further irrigation is limited for technical and economic reasons. a/ Since the early 1960s, the share of rice and wheat in total food production has remained at only about 6 per cent - again, compared with one third in Asia. b/

3. Even where irrigation has been available, the new varieties could not be easily transferred from Asia to Africa without significant yield loss. Agricultural technology is highly location-specific and needs a local research and development capacity for a transfer to be successful. The public and private research capacity in Africa has been rather weak, lacking a critical mass, and biased towards export crops. c/ This also explains in part why there has not been a technological breakthrough in the development of other crops more apt for African conditions, neither for rain-fed coarse-grain cultivation in semi-arid zones, nor for the traditional roots and tubers typical of subsistence agriculture in the more humid regions of Africa. Maize in eastern Africa, particularly in Kenya and Zimbabwe, is the only food crop for which new hybrid seeds have been adopted by farmers to any considerable degree. There has also been some progress recently in the development of high-yielding cassava, but it has yet to be widely adopted by farmers. d/

4. The experience with maize in Kenya and Zimbabwe shows that the development of local research capacity yields results. The development and adoption of maize hybrids benefited from the commercialized farming sector, which pressured

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* World Economic and Social Survey, 1995 (E/1995/50), box VII.2.

for the development of a local research capacity. The farming sector also benefited from an extensive transportation network, well-developed extension and credit systems and a local seed industry. Indeed, Zimbabwe was the second country, after the United States, to develop maize hybrids.

Where new technology is available, adoption is often slow

5. Spreading advanced techniques to the farming community in sub-Saharan Africa entails reaching the low-income farmers, particularly smallholders. About 60 per cent of the rural population lives in poverty and when subsistence in the short-term is at stake, farmers are risk-averse. In such a situation, the adoption of a new technology will be slow unless it is clearly recognizable as superior to, that is as cheaper than, the traditional one, and has a lower yield-variance and a lower risk of failure. However, hybrid varieties need complementary inputs: not only do they have a higher yield but they might also have a higher variance of yield and a higher susceptibility to pests and be more prone to drought. e/ Smallholders also often operate under seasonable labour constraints that hinder the adoption of new techniques requiring additional work during the busy season.

6. Most important, the slow rate of adoption of new seed varieties by smallholders is due to the lack of reliable seed- and fertilizer-delivery systems, infrastructure, extension services and other inputs, as well as inadequate credit. The provision of these items is often biased against smallholders. For instance, it has been observed that in Malawi, smallholders have a preference for flint maize over high-yielding hybrids owing to their poverty, and lack of credit, seeds, extension services and fertilizer, as well as to their taste preferences plus the processing and storability characteristics of the traditional varieties. f/

Need for research on suitable technology

7. In the light of Africa's food situation, research should focus on the development of drought-resistant, low-risk and low-cost seed varieties for rain-fed agriculture that do not need many external inputs. In this regard, the potential of biotechnology - involving genetic manipulation - is momentous. Biotechnology enables the adaptation of seeds to fit the environment instead of adapting the environment to the needs of the new seeds, as was the case with the green revolution in the 1960s and 1970s when the development of irrigation systems and use of chemicals accompanied the adoption of new seeds. With biotechnology, seeds can be developed that better resist drought and disease and are less dependent on fertilizer. So far, however, progress has been rather slow even for the crops that research has concentrated on, let alone for African foods crops.

8. The question is how research can be reoriented towards the typical African food crops and crops suitable for African conditions. There are basically three sites of research: major corporations, and domestic and international research centres. Most African food crops, such as sorghum, millet, cassava, yams and pulses, are neither consumed, nor grown in developed countries, and only a small fraction are exported. Commercial interest at the international level in

research and development of the typical African food crops is therefore small. In effect, the public sector has to play a catalysing role.

9. Domestic research capacity in Africa is itself too weak to generate a new green revolution. This capacity needs to be strengthened, not only for the purpose of participating in some of the new research, but because it will remain essential to adapt new technologies to local conditions and to help close large gaps between the yields on farms and those on experiment stations. g/

10. It thus seems that the basic research thrust has to fall to the network of international agricultural research centres (IARCs). The green revolution of the 1960s and 1970s was almost completely a product of international public research, in particular at the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) and the Centro Internacional de Mejoramiento de Maíz y Trigo (CIMMYT) (International Centre for Maize and Wheat Improvement). In recent years, however, funding has declined for the central network of international agricultural research centres that were brought together under the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) in 1971. h/ Funds for the core programme of CGIAR fell from $275 million in 1990 to $215 million in 1994. In real terms the funds for 1994 were equal to the amount available in 1979, while six additional IARCs have been brought under the CGIAR umbrella since then. Moreover, there is a growing gap between the donor-approved research agenda and the disbursement of funds. i/

11. The decline in international public funding for agricultural research is part of an overall shifting of research expenditure to the private sector. This trend is most extreme for biotechnology where research is concentrated in large corporations of the developed countries that can mobilize the required resources. j/ Only about 10 developing countries - none in Africa - have any capacity to undertake biotechnological research.

12. Even within the private sector, research activity has become increasingly concentrated, in part as a result of the extremely high cost of design and development of a new biotechnological product. This has prompted corporate mergers, take-overs, joint ventures and the proliferation of public-private linkages. Thus, public institutions and universities have focused more on basic research that is partly financed by private firms receiving the patent rights, developing and marketing the product, and collecting royalties.

Property rights

13. The trend towards the privatization of agricultural research has been driven in part by the strengthening of the protection of intellectual property rights under patents and plant breeder's rights, which have increasingly included living materials; k/ but there also exists a danger. Private research entails secrecy and inhibits free dissemination of knowledge, in contrast to the openness and widespread distribution of the results of the green revolution in the 1960s. On the other hand, the wider protection of intellectual property rights might encourage the spreading of new products by the patient holder through exports at prices that include royalties.

14. While the property rights in research outputs have been increasingly protected, rights of the providers of the natural inputs to the research have not been recognized under any current property-rights system. Much of the raw material used for agricultural research, the world's germplasm, has been freely available in the developing countries or through the genebanks of the IARCs. There are even cases in which patents have been applied for or granted to private companies that added little research to what had been undertaken by IARCs or learned by farmers over the years. In such cases, it is possible that farmers might end up paying royalties for use of products whose development was largely based on their own resources and knowledge. l/

15. To counterbalance this asymmetry, the concept of farmers' rights has been developed and endorsed by more than 160 countries in FAO Conference resolutions. The intention is to reward farmers for their efforts in conserving and improving genetic diversity and to allow farmers to benefit from the improved use of plant genetic resources through plant breeding and other scientific methods. m/ For this purpose, an international fund for plant genetic resources will be set up to support plant genetic conservation, management and utilization programmes, particularly in developing countries. According to the resolutions, several areas deserve special priority, including the improvement of plant breeding and seed production. A number of issues regarding this fund, however, need to be resolved. Among them are its resources and how benefits would be transferred to farmers. n/

16. One source of finance for the fund might be revenues from property rights in the germplasm collections of the IARCs. In October 1994 an agreement was signed by the IARCs to place all their genebanks (some 500,000 plant varieties with a large share being unique samples) under the auspices of FAO. Under the agreement, germplasm is to be kept in trust by the IARCs for the benefit of humanity, in particular the people of the developing countries. IARCs agreed not to claim legal ownership nor intellectual property rights. Samples are to be available "without restriction". Material transfer agreements would allow revenues to be collected, while restricting the recipient from seeking patents. These agreements would generally involve, inter alia, an initial payment from the recipient of the germplasm and an agreement on additional payments if the germ plasm is commercialized by the recipient. o/ Perhaps $100 million per year might be mobilized for the fund in this way. p/

Funding a green revolution for Africa

17. These developments - the lack of commercial interest in African food crops, the concentration of research in large corporations and the increasing possibilities for acquiring patents on seeds - raise fears that Africa might never see a green revolution. Earnings from the genebanks might well aid farmers through their being applied to supporting research on seed varieties suitable for African conditions and to helping strengthen research capacity in Africa.

18. However, resources may not be generated by the genebanks for several years and even then may build up only slowly. Research activities warrant increased support today as well as in the future and thus there seems no escaping the appropriateness and desirability of increased international public support for

agricultural research at this time. In the context of donor-country budgets, or even in the context of budgets for ODA, relatively small amounts of funds, which might later be replaced at least in part by earnings from the genebanks, could have very large payoffs in an area that constitutes an important human priority.

Notes

a/ About 75 per cent of all modern and large-scale irrigation in Africa is in Egypt and the Sudan, while about 80 per cent of traditional and small-scale irrigation in Africa is in Madagascar, Nigeria and North Africa. The potential for further irrigation development in northern Africa is small. There is, however, a limited but important and yet largely untapped potential for small-scale irrigation schemes (FAO, African Agriculture: The Next 25 Years (Rome, FAO, 1986), annex IV, pp. 59-61).

b/ Rice cultivation is largely limited to Egypt and Madagascar and to some western African countries where it is much less important. Wheat is largely restricted to northern Africa and South Africa.

c/ Michael Lipton, "The place of agricultural research in the development of sub-Saharan Africa", World Development, vol. 16, No. 10 (October 1988), pp. 1,231-1,257.

d/ David Wigg, The Quiet Revolutionaries: A Look at the Campaign by Agricultural Scientists to Fight Hunger (... and How the Much-neglected Cassava Could Help) (Washington, D.C., World Bank, 1993).

e/ Uma Lele, "Sources of growth in east African agriculture", The World Bank Economic Review, vol. 3, No. 1 (January 1989), p. 136; and Uma Lele, "Structural adjustment, agricultural development and the poor: some lessons from the Malawian experience", World Development, vol. 18, No. 9 (September 1990), p. 1,215.

f/ Uma Lele, "Structural adjustment, agricultural development and the poor: some lessons from the Malawian experience", World Development, vol. 18, No. 9 (September 1990), pp. 1,207-1,219; and Melinda Smale, Paul W. Heisey and Howard D. Leathers, "Maize of the ancestors and modern varieties: the microeconomics of high-yielding variety adoption in Malawi", Economic Development and Cultural Change, vol. 43, No. 2 (January 1995), pp. 351-368. On the importance of the credit constraint, see also Paul Mosley, "Policy and capital market constraints to the African green revolution: a study of maize and sorghum yields in Kenya, Malawi and Zimbabwe, 1960-1991", Innocenti Occasional Papers, Economic Policy Series, No. 38 (Florence, UNICEF, International Child Development Centre, December 1993).

g/ See Michael Lipton, "The place of agricultural research in the development of sub-Saharan Africa", World Development, vol. 16, No. 10 (October 1988), pp. 1,231-1,257; and Donald L. Plucknett, Science and Agricultural Transformation (Washington, D.C., International Food Policy Research Institute, 1993).

h/ CGIAR is an informal association of donors that currently supports 16 IARCs. The World Bank, UNDP and FAO are co-sponsors of CGIAR and the chairperson of the group is an official of the World Bank. CGIAR is assisted by the Technical Advisory Committee with a secretariat at FAO. Four of the 16 research institutions are in Africa. For history and analysis of CGIAR, see Warren C. Baum, Partners Against Hunger: The Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (Washington, D.C., World Bank, 1986).

i/ Overseas Development Institute, "The CGIAR: what future for international agricultural research?", ODI Briefing Paper (September 1994).

j/ Research expenditures in biotechnology by the private sector account for about two thirds of the total (about $4 billion in 1985). In 1990, the biotechnology budget of CGIAR was $14.5 million. For the recent changes in agricultural research, see Kerri Wright Platais and Michael P. Collison, "Biotechnology and the developing world", Finance and Development, vol. 29, No. 1 (March 1992), pp. 34-36; "Trade and development aspects and implications of new and emerging technologies: the case of biotechnology", report of the UNCTAD secretariat (TD/B/C.6/154), 11 March 1991, chap. II.A; and Dina L. Umali, "Public and private sector roles in agricultural research: theory and experience", World Bank discussion paper, No. 176 (Washington, D.C., World Bank, 1992).

k/ Patents are covered under the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property, and plant breeder's rights (or plant-variety rights) are covered under the 1978 Convention of the International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (the UPOV Convention) which was revised in 1991 (see "Trade and Development aspects and implications of new and emerging technologies: the case of biotechnology", report of the UNCTAD secretariat (TD/B/C.6/154), 11 March 1991, chap. II.A). The agreement on trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights (TRIPs), part of the Uruguay Round agreements, obliges member States to provide protection of plant varieties, although disagreements on certain issues continue, for example, regarding materials that already exist in nature. See UNCTAD, The Outcome of the Uruguay Round: An Initial Assessment - Supporting Papers to the Trade and Development Report, 1994 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.II.D.28), chap. VIII, sect. C.2 (a) and sect. D.3; and FAO, "Analysis of some technical, economic and legal aspects for consideration in stage II", Commission on Plant Genetic Resources, first extraordinary session, Rome 7-11 November 1994 (CPGR-Ex 1/94/5 Supp.), September 1994.

l/ Rural Advancement Foundation International (RAFI), Conserving Indigenous Knowledge: Integrating Two Systems of Innovation (New York, UNDP, 1994); UNCTAD, The Outcome of the Uruguay Round: An Initial Assessment - Supporting Papers to the Trade and Development Report, 1994 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.II.D.28), chap. VIII, sect. D.4; and José Esquinas-Alcázar, "Farmers' rights", Patenting workshop, European Parliament, Brussels, 3-4 March 1994.

m/ This is particularly important because farmers need direct incentives to conserve diverse biological varieties in situ (in their natural habitats) while they also replace traditional crops with modern varieties with higher

yields. Farmers are unable, however, to capture the rents associated with the plant genetic resources they conserve; instead, rents accrue in part to plant breeders and seed companies.

n/ FAO, "Issues for consideration in stage II: access to plant genetic resources, and farmers' rights", Commission on Plant Genetic Resources, first extraordinary session: revision of the international undertaking, Rome, 7-11 November 1994 (CPGR-Ex 1/94/5), September 1994; and José Esquinas-Alcázar, "Farmer's rights", Patenting workshop, European Parliament, Brussels, 3-4 March 1994.

o/ FAO, "The international network of ex situ germplasm collections: updating of the progress report on agreements with the international agricultural research centres", Commission on Plant Genetic Resources, first extraordinary session, Rome, 7-11 November 1994 (CPGR-Ex 1/94/Inf.5/Add.1), November 1994; FAO, "Analysis of some technical, economic and legal aspects for consideration in stage II", Commission on Plant Genetic Resources, first extraordinary session, Rome, 7-11 November 1994 (CPGR-Ex 1/94/5 Supp.), September 1994; and RAFI, Conserving Indigenous Knowledge: Two systems of Innovation.

p/ The total contribution of germplasm held by IARCs to crop production in the developed countries is believed to be on the order of $5 billion per year. A standard royalty of 2 per cent would yield $100 million per year. See RAFI, Conserving Indigenous Knowledge: Two Systems of Innovation.

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ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL QUESTIONS: REPORTS OF SUBSIDIARY BODIES, CONFERENCES AND RELATED QUESTIONS

Methods of work of the Committee for Development Planning

Report of the Secretary-General

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* E/1995/100.

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INTRODUCTION

1. At its organizational session for 1995 (7-10 February 1995), the Economic and Social Council decided, inter alia, "to request the Secretary-General to submit a comprehensive report to the Council at its substantive session in 1995 to enable it to review the working methods of the Committee, in line with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 48/162 of 20 December 1993". The present report, prepared in response to the request, attempts to take into account the restructuring of the Economic and Social Council as well as reflections on the work of the Committee made in the course of its own self-evaluations in 1987 1/ and 1990. 2/

I. THE COMMITTEE AND ITS TERMS OF REFERENCE

2. The Committee for Development Planning (CDP) was established by the Council to provide independent expert advice on development trends and projections, including planning techniques and development strategies, and on the activities of the United Nations and its specialized agencies in those fields, in order to propose measures for their improvement. In resolution 1079 (XXXIX) of 28 July 1965, the Council also invited the Committee "to make any suggestions it may consider useful concerning the scope of its terms of reference".

3. At its first and second sessions, the Committee elaborated on its terms of reference, emphasizing the need to devote attention to the design and implementation of effective policies. In its initial years, the Committee gave considerable attention to planning problems, especially those related to plan implementation at the national and regional levels. In that context, the Committee has dealt with a broad range of policy issues.

4. The focus of the Committee's work has evolved in accordance with developments in the world economy and the evolution in the modalities of international economic cooperation. Accordingly, in the 1970s, the Committee devoted considerable time to the formulation of international development strategies and their review and appraisal. Its mandate was also enlarged by specific requests from the Council, largely in connection with the identification of the least developed among the developing countries. Its existing terms of reference impose few constraints on its freedom of action to formulate its work programme as it sees fit.

5. Committee members are appointed by the Council on nomination by the Secretary-General. Nominees are selected with a view to ensuring a high level of practical and academic experience in development policy design and implementation and adequate geographical and gender balance. Some have been based in academic institutions; others have been senior governmental officials, including current or former ministers of development, directors of central banks, heads of research institutes etc. In the past, most Committee members have been economists, but a few have been from other disciplines such as sociology, political science and law. At the same time, care has been taken to ensure that the Committee's collective expertise includes a wide range of specialized interests - e.g., human resources development, environmental

economics, macroeconomics, international trade and finance, and legal frameworks.

II. THEMATIC CONTENT OF THE COMMITTEE'S REPORTS AND ITS RELEVANCE TO INTERGOVERNMENTAL BODIES

6. The thematic content of the reports of the Committee has varied considerably over the years, due to changes in the relative importance of various issues on the agenda of the Council and the General Assembly, changes in the composition of the Committee and interests of Committee members themselves, and the wide latitude for choice of theme implied by the Committee's terms of reference. Annex I provides an illustrative (but not exhaustive) list of topics on formulating and implementing development strategies at the national and international levels. An attempt has been made to identify the contributions made in the reports of the Committee to the various topics and to indicate whether the Committee devoted a major or minor portion of its report to the issue in question. Annex II contains a list of the topics that have been the subject of particularly lengthy treatment in the reports of the Committee.

7. The focus of the Committee's work has evolved in accordance with developments in the world economy and the evolution in the modalities of international economic cooperation. Thus, the coverage of issues from a national or regional perspective was fairly prominent during the first 10 years of the Committee's work. In the 1970s, however, the Committee focused increasingly on the formulation of international development strategies and their review and appraisal. It also addressed itself to a number of specific requests from the Council, largely in connection with the identification of the least developed among the developing countries. Beginning with the report on the twenty-fourth session, the coverage of issues from a national or regional perspective once again gained some prominence. However, it might be noted that coverage of such issues has been unsystematic and far from comprehensive. The regular inclusion in the reports of the Committee of a section on prospects for the world economy and their policy implication began only with the report on the twentieth session, in 1994.

8. The work of the Committee on the formulation of the international development strategies is thought to have been very helpful to the Council and the General Assembly, as has been its work on the identification of the least developed among the developing countries. While the reports of the Committee are of uniformly high quality, a few of them - particularly those on its eighth, tenth, twelfth and twenty-fourth sessions, dealing, respectively, with mass poverty and unemployment, industrialization, depressed regions of the world, and human resources development - were particularly useful for the deliberations of intergovernmental bodies. The first two reports mentioned above contributed to the intergovernmental processes of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), respectively, as well as those of the Council. The third report mentioned above concerned the review and appraisal of the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade (1970s), which was a principal focus of the Council. The fourth report led directly to the major emphasis on human resources development in the International Development Strategy for the

Fourth United Nations Decade (1990s) and was associated with a shift in emphasis by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

9. The Committee has been instrumental in developing or popularizing a number of key conceptual elements in the area of development planning and policies. These include, inter alia, a comprehensive approach to development, which has evolved over time to include social, economic and environmental factors; the category of least developed countries; the close relationship between plans and effective policies for their implementation; and the usefulness of global projections as a background for international economic cooperation.

III. ROLE OF THE COMMITTEE WITHIN THE SYSTEM OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND ITS SPECIALIZED AGENCIES

10. The status of CDP provides it with a unique opportunity to direct its views and recommendations on critical development issues to the international community. However, the effectiveness of the Committee could be much greater if its relationship with the intergovernmental machinery of the Council and the General Assembly were enhanced. The Committee could also become one of the main instruments of the Secretary-General who could turn to the Committee for its advice. Similarly, the bureaux of the Council, its functional Commissions and the Second and Third Committees of the General Assembly could identify forthcoming issues where it is felt that expert advice provided by the Committee would be of particular import. Functioning on the model of national councils of economic or development advisers, the Committee would then be able to draft its views and recommendations in a manner responsive to the priority concerns of the Organization. In order to make timely contributions to the deliberations of the functional Commissions of the Council, working groups established by CDP could submit their reports directly to the body concerned, on the authority of the experts involved. At its plenary session, the full Committee would, of course, consider the working group report, amend it, as necessary, and adopt it, as has been the practice in the past.

11. If the thrust of this recommendation is to be pursued, however, it is of the utmost importance not to jeopardize the independent status of the members of the Committee. More effective use of CDP could reduce - but not eliminate - the need to convene ad hoc expert groups to advise the Secretary-General on specific issues.

12. The Committee has often felt that, to introduce its report, it would be helpful if the Chairperson of the Committee could address the Council at its substantive session, and can thus be expected to welcome the recent Council decision which provides for this procedure, beginning in 1996. When its work is relevant to other intergovernmental bodies, a similar practice might be followed. Informal exchanges between members of the Committee and the delegates to the Council or other bodies could enhance the effectiveness of this practice.

13. In this context, a number of possibilities may be envisaged. If the Council considers it useful for the Committee to continue to prepare an annual appraisal of the policy implications of recent developments and projected trends in the world economy, participation by the Chairperson of the Committee in the high-

level segment during its policy dialogues could be considered. This actually occurred by special arrangement in 1992 on an experimental basis. Should the Committee have addressed an issue relevant to the deliberations of the Council in its coordination segment or in its operational activities segment, the Chairperson of the Committee or a member designated by him/her might be invited to address the Council when the issue in question is to be addressed. Finally, the Chairperson might be invited to introduce the Committee report during the general segment.

IV. QUALITY OF PRODUCT

14. The themes to be addressed by the Committee, their analyses and policy recommendations should be such as to serve as a catalyst to thinking in those areas by all concerned with development problems. Such themes could relate to emerging issues and neglected areas of importance to development.

15. For the Committee to do a thorough job, studies on selected themes need to be prepared, by either outside experts or the Secretariat, for consideration by either working groups of the Committee or the Committee itself. The deliberations of the Committee and its working groups on selected themes would be enhanced through contacts with relevant research institutions, either within the United Nations system or outside of it.

16. CDP should not, however, compete with or duplicate the activities of the various international agencies, including the United Nations itself, especially where in-depth research is required. The limited time during which CDP and its working groups meet means that they should, generally speaking, concentrate on problems and issues for the elucidation of which the accumulated knowledge and experience of members is the crucial input.

V. DISSEMINATION

17. The effectiveness of the Committee's work could be enhanced by greater outreach. Selective efforts might be made to improve the dissemination of its reports and additional resources be sought to accomplish this. Possibilities might include systematic contacts with journalists who specialize in economics and selected non-governmental organizations, use of the information centres of the Department of Public Information, and a cycle of media interviews on development issues related to the Committee's ongoing work. It might also wish to consider requesting the Secretariat to issue the reports of its working groups under departmental "occasional papers" series so as to reach possibly a wider audience by targeting particular groups according to the subject-matter of the reports. The Department for Development Support and Management Services, through its regional and interregional advisers, and the United Nations Development Programme, through its resident representatives, could also help to draw the attention of decision makers at the national level to the work of the Committee.

VI. ORGANIZATION OF WORK

A. Selection of themes

18. Without jeopardizing the independent nature of the Committee, consideration needs to be given to ways of ensuring that the themes chosen by the Committee are pertinent to the deliberations of the Council and/or its functional commissions. This task would be facilitated if the Council would encourage multi-year work programmes in each of its functional commissions and agree on the themes of each of its own segments at least one year in advance.

B. Plenary sessions and working groups

19. CDP meets in plenary session annually, for one week, usually in New York in mid April. The session is preceded by annual meetings of the three working groups, usually in New York or Geneva in the fall or winter. Each working group consists of from five to eight experts, comprising both CDP members and co-opted experts, who meet for from three to five days to explore specific topics. CDP has implemented various changes in its meeting schedule: shorter plenary sessions; reduced processing of documents, particularly in-session documents; and more informal servicing of working groups, usually without simultaneous interpretation. In the view of CDP, many of these changes have increased efficiency and cost-effectiveness. The pattern of meetings permits the effective consideration of CDP reports by the Council, at its annual substantive session, in the general discussion on international economic and social policy.

Notes

1/ E/1987/23, paras. 77-83.

2/ E/1990/27, paras. 146-158.

Annex I

THEMATIC CONTENT OF CDP REPORTS

	Session for which report was prepared	
	Major treatment	Minor treatment
1. Development strategies from national/regional perspective		
1.1 Economic planning		
1.1.1 General observations	2	23
1.1.2 Regional practices and problems	2, 3, 5, 7	
1.2 Sector-specific development strategies and policies		
1.2.1 Industry	7, 10	11, 13, 15, 16
1.2.2 Agriculture and food	2, 5	11, 13, 15, 16
1.2.3 Energy		11, 15, 16
1.2.4 Environment	25	15
1.2.5 Physical infrastructure		12
1.3 Human resources and social aspects		
1.3.1 Health and education (human resource development)	24	15, 16, 23
1.3.2 Poverty and income distribution	8, 12, 24	7, 25
1.3.3 Women		13, 24
1.3.4 Population		13, 16

	Session for which report was prepared	
	Major treatment	Minor treatment
1.4 Domestic resource mobilization		
1.4.1 Fiscal policy	5, 26	23
1.4.2 Domestic capital markets		
1.4.3 Entrepreneurship markets		23
1.4.4 Inflation		
1.5 National policies vis-à-vis international system of trade and finance		
1.5.1 International trade	25, 26	23
1.5.2 Foreign direct investment		27
1.5.3 National debt management		27
1.5.4 Technology transfer		15, 16
1.5.5 Economic reform in developing countries	28	
1.6 Economic cooperation among developing countries	14, 17	3, 5, 19
2. International economic cooperation for development	19, 20, 21, 28	
2.1 Role of the United Nations in the framework of international economic cooperation		28
2.2 International development strategy		
2.2.1 Formulation	4, 6, 16, 25	2, 3, 14, 15
2.2.2 Review and appraisal	9, 12, 13	7, 8
2.2.3 Projection methodology of United Nations agencies		14, 24

		Session for which report was prepared	
		Major treatment	Minor treatment
2.3	International trading system	21	23
2.3.1	Multilateral trading system (GATT)	25	11
2.3.2	Protectionism	26	11
2.3.3	Commodities		
2.4	International monetary and financial system	21	
2.4.1	Balance of payments and adjustments (IMF)	16, 18	
2.4.2	International liquidity	12	
2.4.3	Global demand management	10, 17, 18, 19, 22, 25	20, 23
2.5	Finance and development		
2.5.1	Official flows	22, 27	11, 12, 16, 18, 20, 21
2.5.2	Disarmament and development finance		16, 19
2.5.3	International capital markets and external debt problems	20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 27	12, 19
2.6	Special measures for specific country groups		
2.6.1	Least developed (including criteria)	7, 20, 27	15
2.6.2	Sub-Saharan Africa	20, 21	12
2.7	Technical cooperation for development	28	
3.	Implications of emerging trends for development prospects of developing countries		

		Session for which report was prepared	
		Major treatment	Minor treatment
3.1	World economic outlook on unchanged policies	10, 17, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29	
3.2	Economic and political reform in socialist countries	27	
3.3	Economic integration among developed market economies	26	
3.4	Global environmental and natural resource issues		25
4.	Linkages among sectors/issues		
4.1	Agriculture, industry, population	13	
4.2	Agriculture, industry, commodity trade resource transfers		11
4.3	Environment, development, poverty	28	
4.4	Relation of population growth and migration to natural resources, environment and development	28	

Annex II

ISSUES TREATED IN DEPTH IN CDP REPORTS

	Session
Planning and plan implementation in Latin America	Second
Planning and plan implementation in Africa	Third
Planning and plan implementation in ECAFE region	Fifth
Characteristics and identification of the least developed countries	Seventh
Long-term planning: European experience	Seventh
Mass poverty and unemployment	Eighth
Industrialization of developing countries	Tenth
Depressed regions of the world	Twelfth
Transfer of resources to developing countries	Eleventh
Economic cooperation among developing countries	Fourteenth
Economic cooperation among developing countries	Seventeenth
World economic recovery and international monetary and financial cooperation	Eighteenth
International economic cooperation	Nineteenth
Breaking the barriers to development	Twentieth
The challenge to multilateralism	Twenty-first
Doubling development finance	Twenty-second
Human resource development	Twenty-fourth
External debt, development finance and global macroeconomic management	Twenty-fifth
Water: the fundamental resource	Twenty-fifth
Emerging trading blocs	Twenty-sixth
National fiscal policies	Twenty-sixth

	Session
Reforms in Eastern Europe and the USSR: their impact on developing countries	Twenty-seventh
Criteria for identifying the least developed countries	Twenty-seventh
Environment, development and poverty	Twenty-eighth
Economic reform in developing countries	Twenty-eighth
Population growth and migration in relation to natural resources environment and development	Twenty-ninth
Technical cooperation for sustainable development	Twenty-ninth

Annex III

SYMBOLS OF REPORTS AND DATES OF THE REGULAR SESSIONS OF THE COMMITTEE

Session	Symbol of report	Date of session
First	E/4207/Rev.1	2-11 May 1966
Second	E/4306	10-20 April 1967
Third	E/4515	29 April-10 May 1968
Fourth and fifth	E/4682	17-21 March 1969
Sixth	E/4776	5-15 January 1970
Seventh	E/4990	22 March-1 April 1971
Eighth	E/5126	10-20 April 1972
Ninth	E/5293	2-12 April 1973
Tenth	E/5478	25 March-3 April 1974
Eleventh	E/5671	7-16 April 1975
Twelfth	E/5793	29 March-7 April 1976
Thirteenth	E/5939	11-21 April 1977
Fourteenth	E/1978/46	6-16 March 1978
Fifteenth	E/1979/37	26 March-5 April 1979
Sixteenth	E/1980/3	7-16 January 1980
Seventeenth	E/1981/27	23 March-1 April 1981
Eighteenth	E/1982/15	19-28 April 1982
Nineteenth	E/1983/16	18-27 April 1983
Twentieth	E/1984/17	17-21 May 1984
Twenty-first and resumed twenty-first	E/1985/29	19-21 November 1984 and 20-23 April 1985
Twenty-second	E/1986/26	19-22 March 1986
Twenty-third	E/1987/23	21-24 April 1987
Twenty-fourth	E/1988/16	12-15 April 1988
Twenty-fifth	E/1989/29	9-12 May 1989
Twenty-sixth	E/1990/27	30 April-4 May 1990
Twenty-seventh	E/1991/32	22-26 April 1991
Twenty-eighth	E/1992/27	18-22 April 1992
Twenty-ninth	E/1994/22	12-14 January 1994

Note: The first report issued as a sales publication was that of the sixth session. Subsequently, the reports of the eighth to twenty-eighth sessions (1972-1992) were also issued as sales publications.